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THE MINSTREL,

Sarah F. Low

AND

OTHER POEMS.

THE

MINSTREL;

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS:

WITH

OTHER POEMS,

MANY OF WHICH, INCLUDING THE TRANSLATIONS,

ARE NOW

REPRINTED FROM THE SCARCE COPIES,

AND ARE NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY OTHER EDITION.

BY

JAMES BEATTIE, LL.D.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY ALEXANDER CHALMERS, F.S.A.

London:

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MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE

OF

DR. JAMES BEATTIE.

DR. BEATTIE was born at Laurencekirk, in the county of Kincardine, Scotland, on the 25th day of October, 1735. His father, who was a farmer of no considerable rank, is said to have had a turn for reading and for versifying: but, as he died in 1742, when his son James was only seven years of age, could have had no great share in forming his mind.

James was sent early to the only school his birth-place afforded, where he passed his time under the instructions of a tutor named Milne, whom he used to represent "as a good grammarian, and tolerably skilled in the Latin language, but destitute of taste, as well as of some other qualifications essential to a good teacher." He is said to have preferred Ovid as a school-author, whom Mr. Beattie afterwards gladly exchanged for Virgil. Virgil he had been accustomed to read with great delight in Dryden's translation, as he did Homer in that of Pope; and these, with Thomson's Seasons and Milton's Paradise Lost, of all which he was very early fond, probably gave him that taste for poetry which he afterwards cultivated with so much success.

At this school he made great proficiency by unremitting dili-

gence, which he was sensible was the only stock he could command; and appeared to much advantage on his entering Marischal College, Aberdeen, in 1749, where he obtained the first of those bursaries or exhibitions which were left for the use of students whose parents are unable to support the entire expences of academical education. Here he first studied Greek, under Principal Thomas Blackwell, author of the "Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer;" "Letters concerning Mythology;" and "Memoirs of the Court of Augustus;" works which indicate no small portion of classical taste and learning, and, with the exception of a certain pomposity of manner and quaintness of phraseology, approach nearer the modern style of elegant and nervous writing than had been attempted by any of his countrymen at that period.

Blackwell, with much of the austerity of pedantry, was kind to his diligent scholars, and found in Mr. Beattie a disposition worthy of cultivation and of patronage. In the following year he bestowed on him the premium for the best Greek analysis, which happened to be part of the fourth book of the Odyssey. The other professor, with whom Mr. Beattie was particularly connected, was the late Dr. Alexander Gerard, author of "the Genius and Evidences of Christianity;" "Essays on Taste and Genius;" and other works, particularly two volumes of "Sermons," of acknowledged merit. Under these gentlemen our author's diligence, both at college and during the vacations, was very exemplary, and he accumulated a much more various stock of general knowledge than is usual with young men whose ultimate destination is the church. The delicacy of his health requiring amusement, he found all that amusement can give in cultivating his musical talents, which were very considerable. But there is too much reason to think that his hours of relaxation were very few, and that the earnestness with which he dissuaded his son from excessive study, arose from his repenting

that he had not paid more attention to the exercises which promote health.

The only science in which he made no extraordinary proficiency, and to which he even seemed to have a dislike, was mathematics. In this, indeed, he performed the requisite tasks, but was eager to return to subjects of taste, or general literature. In every other branch of academical study, he never was satisfied with what he learned within the walls of the college. His private reading was extensive and various, and it was with him, as it appears to have been with almost every man of learning, of whom we have had a minute account; he was insensibly guided to cultivate those branches on which his future celebrity was to depend.

In 1753, having gone through every preparatory course of studies, he took the degree of Master of Arts, the only one attainable by students (except of medicine) in any of the universities of Scotland. The first degree of Bachelor is not known, and that of Doctor of Laws or Divinity is usually bestowed on application, at any time of life after leaving college, without the necessity of keeping terms. Mr. Beattie, therefore, had now technically finished his education, and had a profession to seek. He had hitherto been supported by the generous kindness of an elder brother; but he was anxious to exonerate his family from any farther burden. With this laudable view, there being a vacancy for the office of school-master to the parish of Fordoun, adjoining to Laurencekirk, he accepted the appointment, Aug. 1, 1753. There can be no doubt that he performed the duties of this situation with punctuality, but it was neither suited to his disposition, nor advantageous to his progress in life. The emoluments were very scanty, the site remote and obscure; and there was nothing in it to excite emulation, or gratify the ambition which a young man, conscious as he must have been of superior powers and knowledge, might indulge without presump-

tion. He obtained in this place, however, a few friends, particularly Lord Gardenstown and Lord Monboddo, who honoured him with encouraging notice; and he employed his leisure hours in some poetical attempts, which, as they were published in the "Scots Magazine," with his initials, and sometimes with his place of abode, must have contributed to make him yet better known and respected. There are few introductions into life more successful than a pleasing or popular poem; and, indeed, any literary production from an obscure part of the country is generally considered as a phenomenon. These poems attracted the more attention that they happened to be dated from a village little known, and written by a man never heard of.

The church of Scotland was at this time the usual resource of well educated young men, and with their academical stores in full memory, there were few difficulties to be surmounted before their entrance on the sacred office. Although this church presents no temptations to ambition, Mr. Beattie appears to have regarded it as the only means by which he could obtain an independent, however humble, rank in life; and, with his diligence, was confident that the transition from the studies of philosophy and ethics to that of divinity would be easy. He returned, therefore, during the winter, to Marischal College, and attended the divinity lectures of Dr. Robert Pollock, of that college, and of Professor John Lumsden, of King's, and performed the exercises required by the rules of both.

While the church seemed his only prospect, and one which, I have been told, he never contemplated with satisfaction, although few young men lived a more pious and regular life, there occurred in 1757 a vacancy for one of the masters of the grammar-school of Aberdeen, a situation of considerable importance in all respects. This school, which is a public foundation, is conducted by a rector, or head master, and three subordinate masters; the whole is in the patronage of the magistrates of the

city, who are, however, governed in their choice by the issue of a very severe trial of the candidate's ability, carried on by the professors of the university. On this occasion, Mr. Beattie was advised to become a candidate; but he was diffident of his qualifications, and did not think himself so retentive of the grammatical niceties of the Latin language as to be able to answer readily any question that might be put to him by older and more experienced judges. In every part of life, it may be here observed, Mr. Beattie appears to have formed an exact estimate of his own talents; and in the present instance he failed just where he expected to fail, rather in the circumstantial than the essential requisites for the situation to which he aspired. The other candidate was accordingly preferred. But Mr. Beattie's attempt was attended with so little loss of reputation, that a second vacancy occurring a few months after, and two candidates appearing, both unqualified for the office, it was presented to him by the magistrates in the most handsome manner, without the form of a trial, and he immediately entered upon it, June 1758. He was now in the midst of literary society, and had easy access to books, and his conversation-talents, it is yet remembered, daily increased the number of his friends. His emoluments were not great, but his situation had a consequence in the opinion of the public, which to so young a man was not a little flattering.

He had not been long an usher at this school before he published a volume of poems. An author's first appearance is always an important æra. Mr. Beattie's was certainly attended with circumstances that are not now common. This volume was announced to the public in a more humble manner than the present state of literature is thought to demand in similar cases. On the 18th of March 1760, not the volume itself, but "Proposals for printing original Poems and Translations," were issued. The poems appeared accordingly on Feb. 16, 1761,

and were published both in London and Edinburgh. They consisted partly of originals, and partly of the pieces formerly printed in the Scots Magazine, but altered and corrected, a practice which Mr. Beattie carried almost to excess in all his poetical works.*

The praise bestowed on this volume was very flattering. The English critics, who then bestowed the rewards of literature, considered it as an acquisition to the republic of letters, and pronounced that since Mr. Gray (whom in their opinion Mr. Beattie had chosen for his model) they had not met with a poet of more harmonious numbers, more pleasing imagination, or more spirited expression.† This verdict they endeavoured to confirm by extracts from the "Ode to Peace," and "the Triumph of Melancholy." But notwithstanding praises which so evidently tended to give a currency to the poems, and which were probably repeated with eagerness by the friends who had encouraged the publication, the author, upon more serious consideration, was so dissatisfied with this volume as to destroy every copy he could procure, and I have been assured by many of his oldest friends, that they have in vain endeavoured to obtain a sight of it.‡ Nor was this a sudden or splenetic humour in our author. Some years after, when his taste and judgment became fully matured, he refused to acknowledge above four of them, nor would he permit even these to be published without much solicitation.

But notwithstanding the lowly opinion of the author, these poems during their first circulation, which was chiefly in manu-

* The translations were from Virgil's Pastorals, the twenty-second Ode of Anacreon, Invocation to Venus from Lucretius, and two Odes of Horace. These he afterwards totally discarded, but they are now added to his other pieces.

† Monthly Review, vol. xxiv. 1761.

‡ He never spoke of it to his son, and seems to think he had never seen it.

script, contributed so much to the general reputation he had acquired, that he was considered as an honour to his country, and deserving of a higher rank among her favoured sons. Accordingly, a vacancy happening in Marischal College, his friends made such earnest applications in his behalf, that in September 1760 he was appointed by his late Majesty's patent Professor of Philosophy in that College. His department in this honourable office extended to moral philosophy and logic; and it added, in his mind, a very affecting importance to it, that his was the last course of instruction previous to the students leaving college, and dispersing themselves in the world.

This promotion was sudden and unexpected; and it may be supposed that a youth of twenty-five must be ill prepared to give a course of lectures, and a train of instruction on subjects which have been but imperfectly treated by veteran philosophers. Yet it is evident from his printed works, that most of the subjects which belong to his province, had been familiarized to him by a long course of reading and thinking, and that he had very early accustomed himself to composition; and it is highly probable that he brought into the professor's chair such a mass of materials as might with very little trouble be moulded into shape for his immediate purpose. It is certain, however, that such was his diligence, and such his love of these studies, that within a few years he was not only enabled to deliver an admirable course of lectures on moral philosophy and logic, but also to prepare for the press those works on which his fame rests; all of which, there is some reason to think, were written, or nearly written, before he gave the world the result of his philosophical studies in the celebrated "Essay on Truth." It may be added likewise, that the rank he had now attained in the university entitled him to associate more upon a level with Reid and with Campbell, with Gerard and with Gregory, men whose opinions were in many points congenial, and who have all

been hailed by the sister country among the revivers of Scotch literature. Yet their names, it is gratifying to recollect, are but a small part of that catalogue which has, in less than half a century, dispelled national prejudice, and has left none of the effects of comparison except a generous and beneficial emulation.

In 1765 Mr. Beattie published "The Judgment of Paris," a poem, in 4to. Its design was to prove that virtue alone is capable of affording a gratification adequate to our whole nature, the pursuits of ambition or sensuality promising only partial happiness, as being adapted not to our whole constitution, but only to a part of it. So simple a position seems to require the graces of poetry to set it off. The reception of this poem, however, was unfavourable; and although he added it to a new edition of his poems in 1766, he declined afterwards to reprint it. To this edition of 1766 he added a poem "On the talk of erecting a Monument to Churchill in Westminster Abbey," which, Sir William Forbes says, was first published separately and without a name. That it was printed separately, I am informed on undoubted authority; but I question if it ever was published for sale, unless in the above-mentioned edition of his poems. The asperity with which these lines are marked, induced Sir William Forbes, contrary to his first intention, to omit them, but they are now added to his other poems.

Although Mr. Beattie had now acquired a station in which his talents were displayed with great advantage, and commanded a very high degree of respect, the publication of the "Essay on Truth" was the great æra of his life; for this work carried his fame far beyond all local bounds and local partialities. It is not, however, necessary to enter minutely into the history of a work so well known. Its professed intention was to trace the several kinds of evidence and reasoning up to their first principles, with a view to ascertain the STANDARD of TRUTH, and

explain its IMMUTABILITY. He endeavours to show that his sentiments, however inconsistent with the genius of scepticism, and with the practice and principles of sceptical writers, were yet perfectly consistent with the genius of true philosophy, and with the practice and principles of those whom all acknowledge to have been the most successful in the investigation of truth; and he concludes with some inferences or rules, by which the most important fallacies of the sceptical philosophy may be detected by every person of COMMON SENSE, even though he should not possess acuteness of metaphysical knowledge sufficient to qualify him for a logical confutation of them.

The first edition of this Essay was published in an octavo volume in 1770, and bought up with such avidity, that a second was called for, and published in the following year. The interval was short, but as the work had excited the public attention in an extraordinary degree, the result of public opinion had reached the author's ear, and to this second edition he added a postscript, in vindication of a certain degree of warmth of which he had been accused. It is not easy to recollect by whom this accusation was made, or to discover why the author thought it necessary to repel it. It certainly does not appear, either in with-holding justice from his adversaries, or in treating them with a language unbecoming the importance of the subject. He engaged in no personal controversy, and except for Hume, could not be supposed to entertain any personal regard for the writers whose sophistry he endeavoured to expose. This postscript, however, is highly valuable on many accounts. It may be read detached from the work, and read with advantage. It is not only one of the most elegant specimens of writing in our language, but a more faithful summary of the general conduct and artifices of modern sceptics than we have any where seen; and it contains a prediction of the consequences of scepticism on the happiness of mankind, which all who have lived to wit-

ness infidelity let loose upon an infatuated nation, without limitation and without punishment, must acknowledge to be true in every respect.

The mode of treating the writings of infidels, like every other species of controversy, must partake of the varieties of human temper, and temper is frequently observed to take a freer range in the closet than in society. I am willing to allow, therefore, that the author of the "Essay on Truth" is warm when compared to some who have written against Hume and the sceptical philosophers. Dr. Campbell has been praised for his urbanity to Hume, and for carrying on a respectful correspondence with a man whose pernicious opinions he thought it his duty to expose and confute. Dr. Campbell was beyond all doubt sincere, but he was not indignant. The question, therefore, may to some appear of difficult solution, in what manner the professed enemy of Christianity is to be treated? This has been frequently proposed, but it has not been satisfactorily answered. All will acknowledge that there are certain rules of good manners, the breach of which no controversy can justify; but the mere admission of this will probably be thought insufficient. There are men likewise who think that we ought to argue for the evidences of religion and the foundations of human happiness, with as much coolness as if the contest related to the niceties of grammar, or the dates of history; but neither will this be admitted as a consistent principle. In all disputes, the warmth, the zeal, the exertions, must rise in proportion to the value of the object contended for; and if the exuberance of the affections be ever pardonable, it must surely be in the case of a man who endeavours to rescue from sophistry and perversion doctrines of eternal importance; and who sees, or thinks he sees, the religion, morals, and happiness of mankind, at stake. Such was certainly the case of our author, and such was his opinion. He says in the above-mentioned postscript, "when doctrines are published subversive of morality and religion, doctrines of

which I perceive and have it in my power to expose the absurdity, my duty to the public forbids me to be silent; especially when I see that, by the influence of fashion, folly, or more criminal causes, these doctrines spread wider and wider every day, diffusing ignorance, misery, and licentiousness, wherever they prevail."—In this view of his duty, a writer who betrays no warmth, no animated sympathy with his subject, who is courtly in expressing indignation, and shy in exposing danger, must have either been dragged into the contest against his will, or must be indifferent to the issue. The truth is, Mr. Beattie had many opportunities of observing the mischief occasioned by Hume's writings among his countrymen. Hume's fame as a historian contributed not a little to the popularity of his philosophical works. He was among the first of the eminent class of Scotch *literati*, and a very pardonable bias in favour of one who reflected honour upon the nation, induced many to read and fancy themselves convinced by his Essays and Treatises, who would have had no such pleasure or pride in perusing the works of the most celebrated English or foreign sceptics.

The "Essay on Truth," whatever objections were made to it, and it met with very few public opponents,* had a more extensive circulation than probably any work of the kind ever published. This may be partly attributed to the charms of that popular style in which the author conveyed his sentiments on subjects which his adversaries had artfully disguised in a metaphysical jargon, the meaning of which they could vary at pleasure; but the eagerness with which it was bought up and read, arose chiefly from the just praise bestowed upon it by the most distinguished friends of religion and learning in Great Britain.

* The principal publication was Dr. Priestley's "Examination of Dr. Reid on the Human Mind; Dr. Beattie on the Nature and Immutability of Truth; and Dr. Oswald's Appeal to Common Sense," Oct. 1775. Dr. Priestley prefers the system of Dr. Hartley, which he was then endeavouring to introduce; but the flippant and sarcastic style he assumed on this occasion was disapproved even by his own friends.

With many of these, of high rank both in church and state, the author had the pleasing satisfaction of dating his acquaintance from the publication of this work. There appeared, indeed, in the public in general an honourable wish to grace the triumph of sound reasoning over pernicious sophistry. Hence in less than four years five large editions of the Essay were sold, and it was translated into several foreign languages, and attracted the notice of many eminent persons in France, Germany, Holland, Italy, and other parts of the continent.

Among other marks of respect, the University of Oxford conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws* on the author, and on his second arrival in London he was most graciously received by his Majesty, who not only bestowed a pension on him, but admitted him to the honour of a private conference. Many years after, when Dr. Beattie went to pay his respects to his Majesty, he was still received with every mark of royal condescension and kindness. In the last, or nearly the last conversation I enjoyed with him, he observed how much he was always surprised with the intelligent remarks and intimate knowledge which his Majesty displayed, not only on general topics of national literature, but even the minute history of what was going on at the Scotch universities.

It was in July 1771 that Dr. Beattie first visited London, and commenced a personal acquaintance with men of the first eminence, with Lord Mansfield and Lord Lyttelton, Drs. Hurd, Porteus, Johnson, Mr. Burke, and, indeed, the whole of the literary society whose conversations have been so pleasantly detailed by Mr. Boswell; and returned to Scotland with a mind

* I believe he had received this honour some time before from King's College, Aberdeen. He was afterwards chosen Member of the Zealand Society of Arts and Sciences, and of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, and was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh; but with the dates of these I am unacquainted.

elevated and cheered by the praise, the kindness, and the patronage of the good and great. It was, however, on his second visit to London, in 1773, that he received his degree from Oxford, and those honours from his Majesty, which we anticipated as a direct, though not an immediate consequence of the services he rendered to his country by the publication of the "Essay on Truth." His conversation with his Majesty is detailed at some length by himself, in a Diary published by Sir William Forbes.

Although Mr. Beattie had apparently withdrawn his claims as a poet, by cancelling as many copies of his juvenile attempts as he could procure, he was not so inconscious of his admirable talents, as to relinquish what was an early and favourite pursuit, and in which he had probably passed some of his most delightful hours. A few months after the appearance of the "Essay on Truth," he published the "First Book of the MINSTREL," in 4to, but without his name. By this omission, the poem was examined with all that rigour of criticism which may be expected in the case of a work, for which the author's name can neither afford protection or apology. He was accordingly praised for having adopted the measure of Spenser, because he had the happy enthusiasm of that writer to support and render it agreeable; but objections were made to the limitation of his plan to the *profession* of the Minstrel, when so much superior interest might be excited by carrying him on through the practice of it. It was objected also, that the sentiment of the first stanza appeared too close a copy from a passage in Gray's celebrated Elegy; and several lines were pointed out as unequal, and inconsistent with the general measure, or with the dignity of the subject.

These objections appear to have coincided with the author's re-consideration; and he not only adopted various alterations recommended by his friends, but introduced others, which made

the subsequent editions of this poem far more perfect than the first. Of the original preface he retained so little, that an exact copy of it may not be unacceptable to our readers, as the old editions of the Minstrel are become very rare.

"The first hint of this performance was suggested by Dr. Percey's ingenious Essay on the English Minstrels, prefixed to his first volume of Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.

"My design was to trace the progress of a poetical genius, born in a rude and illiterate age, from the first dawnings of fancy and reason, till that period in which he may be supposed capable of supporting the character of a MINSTREL, that is, of an itinerant poet and musician:—a character which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable but sacred. A poetical illustration of such a subject seemed to promise variety of amusement, and even some topics of instruction both moral and philosophical. Perhaps I mistook it, as well as my own abilities: however, in making a trial there could not be much harm. My friends are pleased with what I have done; but, as they cannot entirely acquit themselves of partiality, advise me to lay a specimen before the public.

"The pursuits and amusements of the Minstrel's childhood and early youth are described in this First Book; which, if the title were altered, and a few phrases struck out that refer to a sequel, might perhaps be considered as a sort of whole by itself. The incidents that qualify him for his profession, and determine him to enter upon it, will furnish materials for the books that are to follow. If this be honoured with the public approbation, I shall think it has merit sufficient to justify my bestowing some time in finishing what remains, which is already in great forwardness. Should it be unsuccessful, I will, with no great concern, relinquish a scheme which cannot be completed without such expence of time and thought as a person in my way of life cannot easily spare. If, as the critics tell us, the chief end of

poetry is to please, surely the man who writes verses with some inconvenience to himself, and without any pleasure to the public, spends his time to very little purpose.

"I have endeavoured to imitate Spenser, not in his allegory or antiquated dialect, which, though graceful in him, appear sometimes awkward in modern writers, but in the measure and harmony of his verse, and in the simplicity and variety of his composition. All antiquated expressions I have studiously avoided; admitting, however, some old words, where they seemed peculiarly suitable to the subject: but I hope none will be found that are now obsolete, or in any degree unintelligible to a reader of English poetry.

"To those who may be disposed to ask, what could induce me to write in so difficult a measure, I can only answer, that it pleases my ear, and seems from its gothic structure and original to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the poem. It admits both simplicity and magnificence of sound and language, beyond any other stanza that I am acquainted with. It allows the sententiousness of the couplet, and something too of the diversified cadence and complicated modulation of blank verse. What some of our critics have remarked of its uniformity growing at last tiresome to the ear, will be found to hold true, only when the poetry is faulty in other respects."

The Minstrel, however, in its first form, contained so many passages of genuine poetry, the poetry of nature and of feeling, and was so eagerly applauded by those whose right of opinion was incontestible, that it soon ran through four editions; and in 1774 the author produced the "Second Book." This, although of a more philosophical cast, and less luxurious in those descriptions which appeal to every heart, yet contained such noble imagery, and so many proofs of the "lively, plastic imagination," as to place the author in the first rank of modern poets. As the success of the Second Book was not inferior to that of the first,

it was the general wish that the author would fulfil his promise by completing the interesting subject. I believe he fully intended this; but the increasing business of education, the cares of a family, and the state of his health, originally delicate, and never robust, deprived him of the time and thought which he considered as requisite. In 1777, however, he was induced to publish the two parts of the Minstrel together, and to add a few of his juvenile poems. In his advertisement he informs us, that "they are all of which he is willing to be considered as the author." Some poems about this time had been ascribed to him which he never wrote; and those pieces which he wished to consign to oblivion, had been published by persons who hoped to profit by the now established fame of the author.*

During the preceding year, 1776, he prepared for the press a new edition of the "Essay on Truth," in a more splendid form than it had hitherto appeared in, and attended with circumstances of public esteem which were very flattering. These will be best understood in his own modest advertisement.

"About three years ago some persons of distinction in England, who had honoured me with their friendship, were pleased to express a desire that the Essay on Truth should be printed in a more splendid form than that in which it had hitherto appeared; and so as to ensure profit, as well as honour, to the author. And the proprietors of the copyright, being at the same time applied to, declared their willingness to permit an edition to be printed for his advantage, on his agreeing to certain terms, which were thought reasonable.

"It was then proposed that a new edition of the Essay should be printed in quarto, by subscription. To this the author had some objections; he was apprehensive that the size of that work

* In 1780 a spurious edition appeared of his Juvenile Poems, with some which he never wrote, from Dodsley's Collection. This volume he disowned in a public advertisement. Even the publishers' names were spurious.

might be inadequate to such a purpose. Besides, to publish in this manner a book which had already gone through two or three editions, seemed hazardous, because unprecedented; and might, to those who were uninformed of the affair, give ground to suspect the author of an infirmity, which no person who knows him will ever lay to his charge, an excessive love of money.

"It was answered, that the volume might be extended to a sufficiency of size, by printing, along with that ON TRUTH, some other ESSAYS, which, though not originally designed for the press, his friends, who had seen them, were pleased to think not unworthy of it; and that the proposed subscription, being of a peculiar kind, should be conducted in a peculiar manner. 'It shall never,' said the promoters of the undertaking, 'be committed to booksellers, nor made public by advertisements; nobody shall be *solicited* to join in it; we, by ourselves and our friends, shall carry it on, without giving you any further trouble, than just to signify your consent, and prepare your materials;—and if there be, as we have reason to think there are, many persons of worth and fortune who wish for such an opportunity as this will afford them, to testify their approbation of you and your writings, it would seem capricious in you to deprive them of that satisfaction, and yourself of so great an honour.'

"To a proposal so uncommonly generous the author could not refuse his consent, without giving himself airs which would not have become him. He therefore thankfully acquiesced," &c.

The subscription-money was a guinea, but I am not certain that subscribers were limited to that sum. The list of subscribers amounted to four hundred and seventy-six names of men and women of the first rank in life, and of all the distinguished literary characters of the time. The copies subscribed for amounted to seven hundred and thirty-two, so that no inconsiderable sum must have accrued in this delicate manner to the author. Dr. Beattie was by no means rich; his pension was only two

hundred pounds, and the annual amount of his professorship, I have reason to think, never reached that sum.

The Essays added to this volume, and which he afterwards printed separately in octavo, were "On Poetry and Music;" on "Laughter and ludicrous Composition;" and "on the Utility of Classical Learning." They were written many years before publication, and besides being read in a private literary society, had been submitted to the judgment of his learned friends in England, who recommended them to the press. In ordinary cases this advice has no value, because it is a matter of course; but Dr. Beattie could have discerned flattery had it been offered him, and was too good a critic to be deceived by the common-place returns to such applications. His friends, however, in this instance, only anticipated the praises of a more numerous class, to whom his Essays appeared to discover a taste and style formed and improved on the chastest models, and to be remarkable for elegance, correctness, and sound judgment. The first, which was written in 1762, when the author had only reached his twenty-seventh year, evinces a great fund of reading, and such acquaintance with ancient and modern learning, and such discrimination in objects of criticism, as are rarely found in persons of that age. He is particularly happy in his illustrations; and as he had no new theories to advance, and no paradoxes to catch applause at the expence of established truths, perhaps there are few books that may with more safety be placed in the hands of a young man to regulate his taste, and direct him in the study of polite literature. This opinion, which belongs more particularly to the first two of these Essays, may yet be applied to the third, where we have an important question in education discussed with logical precision, and with a force of argument which it will be difficult to answer. It is, however, still more pleasing to remark, that in these as well as in his next work, he never fails to introduce into questions of

taste allusions to those subjects of piety and morals, of which, as a teacher of youth, he never lost sight, and was eager to inculcate.

For the frequent introduction of practical and serious observations, he offers a satisfactory reason in the preface to "Dissertations Moral and Critical, on Memory and Imagination; on Dreaming; the Theory of Language; on Fable and Romance; on the Attachments of Kindred; and Illustrations on Sublimity," 4to, 1783. These, he informs us, were at first composed in a different form, being part of a course of prelections read to those young gentlemen whom it was his business to initiate in the elements of moral science; and he disclaims any nice metaphysical theories, or other matters of doubtful disputation, as not suiting his ideas of moral teaching. Nor was this the disgust of a metaphysician "retired from business." He had ever been of the same opinion. In a letter to his friend Gray, dated March 30, 1767, he says, "It is a fault common to almost all our Scotch authors, that they are too metaphysical. I wish they would learn to speak more to the heart and less to the understanding; but alas! this is a talent which heaven only can bestow: whereas a philosophical spirit (as we call it) is merely artificial, and level with the capacity of every man who has much patience, a little learning, and no taste." Dr. Beattie's aim was, indeed, in all his lectures, "to inure young minds to habits of attentive observation; to guard them against the influence of bad principles; and to set before them such views of nature, and such plain and practical truths, as may at once improve the heart and the understanding, and amuse and elevate the fancy."*

* Cowper's praise of this volume is too valuable to be omitted.—"Beattie, the most agreeable and amiable writer I ever met with; the only author I have seen whose critical and philosophical researches are diversified and embellished

Of these Essays, the preference has been generally given to those on "Memory and Imagination," and on "Fable and Romance," and to "The Theory of Language." In re-publishing the latter separately for the use of seminaries of education, he complied with the wish of many readers and critics. In all these Essays, his elegant and pertinent remarks, forcible illustrations, and occasional anecdotes and digressions, afford a variety and pleasure in the perusal which are rarely to be expected from the discussion of such subjects, when the writer's object is to surprise by paradoxical assertions, and at whatever expence of truth and sense, to obtain the praise due to original theory. It is by this affectation of new discoveries that so many late writers have become either unintelligible or pernicious.

During a visit to the metropolis in 1784, Dr. Beattie submitted to the late Dr. Porteus, Bishop of London, with whose friendship he had long been honoured, a part of a work which at that excellent prelate's desire he published in 1786, entitled, "Evidences of the Christian Religion briefly and plainly stated," 2 vols. 12mo. This likewise formed part of his concluding lectures to his class, and he generally dictated an abstract of it to them in the course of the session. From a work of this kind, and on a subject which had employed the pens of the greatest

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bellished by a poetical imagination, that makes even the driest subject, and the leanest, a feast for an epicure in books. He is so much at his ease too, that his own character appears in every page, and, which is very rare, we see not only the writer, but the man; and the man so gentle, so well tempered, so happy in his religion, and so humane in his philosophy, that it is necessary to love him if one has any sense of what is lovely." *Hayley's Life of Cowper*, vol. iii. p. 247.—In a letter I received from Dr. Beattie, a few weeks before the appearance of the Dissertations, he says, "I am very doubtful of their success, very doubtful, indeed; however it is now too late to perplex myself on that head—a great deal is added, and a very great deal corrected since I ———— to have you in my little auditory."

and best English writers, much novelty was not to be expected, nor in its original form was any novelty intended. It must be allowed, however, that he has placed many of the arguments for the evidences of Christianity in a very striking and persuasive light, and it is not too much to suppose that if he could have devoted more time and study to a complete review and arrangement of what had, or might be advanced on these evidences, he would have produced a work worthy of his genius, and worthy of the grandeur and importance of the subject.* It is highly honourable to the present age, that so many attempts were made to supply this defect, when the contemptuous and contemptible sophistry and perversions of infidelity threatened to introduce among us the miseries they had too successfully brought on the continent of Europe.

In the preface to Dr. Beattie's "Dissertations," he intimated a design of publishing the whole of his Lectures on Moral Science, but from this he was diverted by the cogent reasons there assigned. He was encouraged, however, to present to the public, in a correct and somewhat enlarged form, the abstract which he used to dictate to his scholars. Accordingly, in 1790, he published "Elements of Moral Science," vol. i. 8vo, including psychology, or perceptive faculties and active powers; and natural theology; with two appendixes on the incorporeal nature and on the Immortality of the Soul. The second volume was published in 1793; containing ethics, economics, politics, and logic. All these subjects are necessarily treated in a summary manner; but it will be found sufficiently comprehensive, not only for a text-book, or book of elements, which was the professed intention of the author, but also as an excellent aid

* In a letter which I received from Dr. Beattie, dated March 26, 1786, he says of his "Evidences"—"In closeness of matter and style I should not scruple to prefer (this work) to any of my other things."

to the general reader who may not have an opportunity of attending regular lectures, and yet wishes to reap some of the advantages of regular education. To the religious, moral, or literary opinions occasionally interspersed, it will not be easy to find an objection; and in this, as in his former works, his peculiar excellence lies in exposing the sophistries of modern philosophy, sometimes by the argumentative process, and sometimes by shewing how incapable and unworthy they are of any serious refutation.

In vol. ii. there occurs a dissertation against the Slave Trade, which the author informs us he wrote in 1778, with a view to a separate publication, and of this it is still worthy. He has exposed the weak defences set up for that abominable traffic with wonderful acuteness, and upon the whole appears to me to be unanswerable in his main positions.

These "Elements" have not had the success of some of his other works, yet I should be inclined to prefer them to all in point of utility. It were to be wished, however, that the work had been accompanied by an index, and by that pathetic lecture with which he was accustomed to conclude his course. He has also omitted the list of books on subjects treated in his lectures, which he dictated to his scholars. This list, indeed, would now perhaps appear very imperfect, although his criticisms on books were always valuable; but he had so much more pleasure in praise than in censure, that in his essays and dissertations, and in his lectures, he expatiated chiefly on those authors of whom he could speak with delight, and whom he could recommend as models of elegant taste and pure morals. It was one of his parting exhortations to his scholars to "read no bad books, as the world afforded more good ones than they could ever have leisure to read with the attention they deserved."

To the second volume of the Transactions of the Royal

Society of Edinburgh, published in 1790,* he contributed "Remarks on some Passages of the Sixth Book of the Æneid." This was, in fact, a dissertation on the mythology of the Romans, as poetically described by Virgil, in the episode of the descent of Æneas into hell; and the author's object was to vindicate his favourite poet from the charges of impiety, &c. brought against him by Warburton and others. In the same year he is said to have superintended an edition of "Addison's periodical Papers," published at Edinburgh in 4 vols. 8vo. To this, however, he contributed only a few notes to Tickell's Life of Addison, and to Dr. Johnson's remarks. It were to be wished he had done more. Addison never had a warmer admirer, nor a more successful imitator. He always recommended Addison's style to his pupils, and it is evident from the whole of his works that it was his own model. No man in our times has imitated the chaste simplicity and perspicuity for which Addison is distinguished with such palpable success. I know that he "gave his days and nights to Addison," and it was by this that he attained an English style "familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious."

In his remarks on the character of Sir Roger de Coverley, he has fallen into the same mistake with Johnson, in supposing that that character was sketched or begun by Addison. This has long been a popular error, or, in Drs. Johnson and Beattie, an oversight, which might have been avoided by consulting Tickell's edition of Addison's works. Addison certainly wrote some of

* About the year 1778 he printed a Letter to Dr. Blair "On the Improvement of Psalmody in Scotland." This was only privately circulated. It contained, if I remember right, a few specimens of translations of the Psalms. He printed also some years after a list of Scotticisms, for the use of his students. These he used to make them transcribe; but in this list are some expressions which in my MS. copy of his Lectures when he borrowed it of me in 1778, he altered to *English barbarisms.*

the best papers in which the knight's adventures are related; but the original outline belongs incontestibly to Steele.

In 1794 appeared the last work our author composed, and its history requires some notice of his family. In 1767 he married Miss Mary Dun, daughter of Dr. James Dun, rector or head master of the grammar school of Aberdeen, a man of great personal worth, and an excellent classical scholar. He had been either a teacher or rector of that school above half a century, and will be long remembered by his numerous pupils, as one who united the dignity of the master to the suavity of the parent.

With this lady Dr. Beattie enjoyed for many years as much felicity as the married state can add; and when she visited London with him, she shared amply in the respect paid to him, and in the esteem of his illustrious friends. By her he had two sons, James *Hay*, so named from the Earl of Errol, one of his old and steady friends; and *Montagu*, from the celebrated Mrs. Montagu, in whose house Dr. Beattie frequently resided when in London. While these children were very young, Mrs. Beattie was seized with an indisposition, which, in spite of all care and skill, terminated in the painful necessity of separation from her husband. The care of the children now entirely devolved on the father, whose sensibility received such a shock from the melancholy circumstance alluded to, as could only be aggravated by an apprehension that the consequences of Mrs. Beattie's disorder might not be confined to herself. This alarm, which often preyed on his spirits, proved happily without foundation. His children grew up without the smallest appearance of the hereditary evil; but when they had just begun to repay his care by a display of early genius, sweetness of temper, and filial affection, he was compelled to resign them both to an untimely grave. His eldest son died November 19, 1790, in his twenty-second year; and his youngest on March 14, 1796, in his eighteenth

year. The death of the latter was occasioned by a rapid fever. The suddenness of the shock made it more deeply felt by the father, as he had not yet recovered from the loss of the eldest, who was taken from him by the slow process of consumption.

Soon after the death of James Hay, his father drew up an account of his "Life and Character;" to which were added, "Essays and Fragments," written by this extraordinary youth. Of this volume a few copies only were printed, and were given as "presents to those friends with whom the author was particularly acquainted or connected." Dr. Beattie was afterwards induced to permit the Life and some of the Essays and Fragments to be printed for publication, and being mostly poetical, they now form a companion-volume to his own poems. The life is perhaps one of the most interesting and affecting narratives in our language. It is written with great simplicity of style, and with so much impartiality in those passages where praise or censure can have admittance, that there is probably no reader of whatever judgment, who would not rather subscribe to his opinion than exert the privilege of criticism. It is impossible, indeed, to contemplate without emotion the exquisite tenderness of an affectionate and mourning parent, soothing himself by the remembrance of filial piety and departed excellence; and humbly, yet fondly, endeavouring to engage the sympathies of the world in behalf of a genius that might have proved one of its brightest ornaments.

After the loss of this amiable youth, who in 1787 had been appointed successor to his father, and had occasionally lectured in the professor's chair, Dr. Beattie resumed that employment himself, and continued it, although with intervals of sickness and depression, until the unexpected death of his second and last child, in 1796. His hopes of a successor, of his name and family, had probably been revived in this youth, who exhibited

many proofs of early genius, and for some time before his death had prosecuted his studies with great assiduity. But here too he was compelled again to subscribe to the uncertainty of all human prospects. Great, however, as the affliction was, it would be pleasing to be able to add, that he acquiesced with pious resignation, and laid hold on the hopes he knew so well how to recommend, and which yet might have cheered, if not gladdened his declining life. But from this period he began to withdraw from society, and brooded over the sorrows of his family, until they overpowered his feelings, and abstracted him from all the comforts of friendship and all power of consolation. The last three years of his life were passed in hopeless solitude, and he even dropt his correspondence with those remote friends with whom he had long enjoyed the soothing interchange of elegant sentiment and friendly attachment. His health, in this voluntary confinement, gradually decayed, and extreme and premature debility, without any acute disorder, terminated his good and useful life, on the 18th day of August, 1803. His reputation was so well founded and so extensive, that he was universally lamented as a loss to the republic of letters, and particularly to the university to which he had been so long a public benefactor and an honour.

Of his general character a fair estimate may be formed from his works, and it is no small praise that his life and writings were in strict conformity. No man ever felt more strong impressions of the value of the virtues he recommended than Dr. Beattie. Although he disdained the affectation of feeling, and the ostentation of extraordinary purity, he yet more abhorred the character of those writers whose professions and practice are at variance. His zeal for religious and moral truth, however censured by those to whom religion and truth are adverse, originated in a mind fully convinced of the importance of what he

prescribed to others, and anxious to display, where such a display was neither obtrusive nor boastful, that his conviction was sincere, and his practice resolute.

It may not be amiss in this place to take some notice of a slander which the friends, at least the injudicious ones, of Hume have been industrious to propagate, because, if true, it would have proved a littleness of mind of which none who knew Dr. Beattie could accuse him. It has been said that he submitted his juvenile poems to Mr. Hume, at that time considered as the arbiter of taste, who either returned them with severe censure, or spoke of them with contempt, and that this was the real motive which prompted Dr. Beattie to write the "Essay on Truth." Such is the story; and whoever compares the provocation with the revenge, will not think it very probable.* It is the part of malignity itself to search painfully for one bad motive where so many good ones are at hand. Nothing surely can be more false or absurd than this piece of slander. If Mr. Hume criticised Dr. Beattie's poetry with severity, which may be admitted, he certainly could not have been a more rigid censor than the author himself. Dr. Beattie, almost as soon as his volume of early poems was published, and while the praises of every friend and of many strangers were yet sounding in his ears, suppressed the farther publication, and endeavoured to recover the copies that had been circulated; and for many years refused all applications to reprint the few articles in our present volume, and that with the utmost pertinacity. The presumption therefore must be, either that he originally thought as slightingly of those poems as Mr. Hume, or that Mr. Hume had brought him over to his opinion. In either case there could be no such breach of friendship, and surely no such indignant recollection as to provoke the "Essay on Truth." The fact will be acknowledged by all who had personal intimacy with Dr.

* See a Letter on this subject in Sir W. Forbes's Life, vol. i. p. 330.

Beattie, and they only can be the proper judges of his feelings, that it was not the severity of criticism that he at any time dreaded or avoided. In Gray, who was his intimate friend and correspondent, he found a critic whose opinions might have mortified the vanity of the most conceited of youthful poets. On one occasion, indeed, Gray placed the dangers of poetry before his eyes in such a striking light, that he appeared willing to renounce the muses altogether.* Such was our author's diffidence in all his productions, that he ventured nothing without consulting his friends, and received very few proposals of correction in which he did not acquiesce. If with this humble and respectful disposition Mr. Hume insulted his feelings, or wished to discourage the early attempts of genius, although his conduct might not provoke the "Essay on Truth," it forms a part of his character on which his friends ought to be silent, unless they can explain it in a more satisfactory manner.

As a poet, it must be confessed, that Dr. Beattie came slowly into the world; he did not astonish in his days of childhood and ignorance, by those wonderful efforts which speak the extraordinary teachings of nature. That he had a talent for poetry will not be denied, but it was a talent to be cultivated, and in this respect he has not differed from the most eminent names on the list of English poets. "To touch and re-touch," says Cowper, "although some writers boast of negligence, and others would be ashamed to show their foul copies, is the secret of almost all good writing, especially in verse." Dr. Beattie was a poet without self-love and without conceit, and his fame might be safely trusted in his own hands. What he wrote, and at whatever period of his life, he was able to criticise with impartiality and with taste. He had an eye rather to future than to present reputation, and so far was he from soliciting the complimentary opinions of friends, that I suspect he did not rate

* Mason's Life of Gray, p. 319, edit. 4to, 1775.

very highly the judgment of those who had praised the early productions of his muse. It is certain that he suppressed those poems, in defiance of their suffrages; and, until he was encouraged to publish "The Minstrel," never, in his own opinion, had laid a fair claim to the reputation of a poet. The many "touchings and retouchings" he made in this excellent poem are no inconsiderable proofs of his judgment and his diffidence, for he frequently corrected that which all who then distributed the rewards of fame considered as perfect.

As a philosopher, it is no deduction from his merit that his celebrated Essay is now little read. It rose to higher reputation in its day than any work of the kind ever published; and the little opposition made to it is a proof that it answered the full purpose of the author. His expectations, indeed, were moderate; he knew that in controversy it is more easy to gain the victory than to impose terms on the vanquished. Hume, we are told, remained silent, in consequence of a resolution he had formed, not to answer any opponent; and after declining all notice of Dr. Campbell, whose superiority, in his "Essay on Miracles," has never been disputed, it was not to be supposed he would break his engagement in favour of Dr. Beattie. But that he felt the attack is generally acknowledged, for this was the first time that the sophistry of his general system had been detected in a popular manner, and the absurdity as well as the mischief accruing from his principles fairly laid open. As to the French philosophers, whom our author incidentally noticed, it was not their object at that time to provoke a public controversy. They were effecting their purpose by surer means, and Dr. Beattie lived to see their principles triumphant in the destruction of religion, humanity, and social order.

Infidel writings have been obtruded on the world at different periods, and after having been set to rest for a time, have again been revived to serve new purposes. But on these revivals, it

does not always happen that the controversial works of one period will supply the wants of the next. New means of attack require new means of defence. The infidel publications which appeared about the conclusion of the last century, were, in substance, mere transcripts of those which appeared at the beginning of it. But style was altered, and cunning assumed new shapes; a new class of men were to be influenced, and what once was confined to the speculations of the learned, was now to be adapted to a certain weak and feverish state of mind among the vulgar; until at length the controversy seemed to be taken entirely out of the hands of men of literature, and placed in those of mechanics and paupers. The blasphemies of Paine might have sunk into contempt, had they not been circulated, with liberal industry, among those who could read, but could not think, and who wanted a palliative to their conscience, or a screen to their profligacy. To debauch the minds of the lower classes was the last effort of the last race of infidels, and the suppression of them necessarily devolved on the civil magistrate.

But whatever reputation Dr. Beattie enjoyed from his philosophical and critical works, his praise was yet higher in all the personal relations of public and private life. His excellence as an instructor may be gathered from his printed works; but it remains to be added, that few men have exceeded him in anxious and kind attentions to his pupils. It was his practice, while under his care, to invite them by small parties to his house, and unbend his mind in gay conversation, encouraging them to speak with familiarity on common topics, and to express their doubts with freedom on any subjects connected with their studies. Those whom he observed particularly regular and attentive in the class, and who by their answers or remarks discovered the improvements of private assiduity, he honoured with his kindest patronage, and corresponded on easy and

friendly terms with many of them, long after they quitted the university. By these means he was so endeared to his scholars, that I am not able to mention him at all as a disciplinarian. I can recollect no instance in which he found it necessary to command attention by any influence more strong than the reverence which his character and manners procured without any effort, and continued without any abatement.

As a husband and father, if he had any fault, it was that of extreme tenderness and sensibility. He was indeed "tremblingly alive" to every circumstance that affected the objects of his love. Yet who will arraign these feelings, or set bounds to parental care? The danger, let it be remembered, was all his own: his children betrayed none of the wayward consequences of indulgence; they amply repaid his anxious fondness, and he derived a pleasure from their advancement, which was very remote from the unsteady caprice of parental weakness. The talents of his eldest son, as they were cultivated chiefly in retirement, were not generally known; but those with whom he associated knew him for a youth of wonderful innocence, purity, and simplicity of mind and manner. Nor was his brother, of whom however I knew less from personal acquaintance, inferior in the valuable qualities of the heart. On them, therefore, the father's fondness produced none of the consequences of affection which in many is rather a weakness than a virtue. He was himself the only sufferer by his excess of sensibility; and we must ever lament that it embittered those years which good men usually pass in cheerful remembrances, and exemplary resignation.

None were more affected by his melancholy retreat from society, than those who could recollect him in his happier days of health and hope. As a companion, few men exhibited more captivations. From his assiduous application to study, and the time he found it necessary to devote to his published works and

to his academical duties, it may easily be supposed he could not spare many hours to company. Yet he had a keen relish for social intercourse, and was remarkably cheerful and communicative. It has not yet been mentioned, but it may be observed from various parts of his writings, that he had a turn for humour, and a quick sense of the ridiculous. This, however, was so chastened by the elegance of his taste, and the benevolence of his disposition, that whatever fell from him of that kind was devoid of coarseness or asperity. In conversation he never endeavoured to gain superiority, or to compel attention, but contrived to take his just share, without seeming to interrupt the loquacity of others. He had, however, what most men have who are jealous of their reputation, a degree of reserve in promiscuous company, which he entirely discarded among those whom he loved, and in whom he confided. Among strangers, too, there was a studied correctness in his expression, which was either unnecessary, or appeared more easy and natural, in his familiar hours.

Of his talent for humour, he gave some specimens in a periodical journal published at Aberdeen, which seem not unworthy of being added to his miscellaneous works, if they could be ascertained; but he did not seek the reputation of a wit, and I am not sure that he permitted his name to transpire. In London, it is yet remembered that his conversation-talents were much admired, and no doubt procured him a long continuance of those friendships with men of rank, which are rarely to be preserved without something more than the mere possession of genius. His modest and engaging manners rendered him equally acceptable to the courtly and elegant Mansfield, and to the rough and unbending Johnson. To Mrs. Montagu's literary parties he was ever a most acceptable addition; and he lived with the late Bishop of London, with Sir Joshua Reynolds, and with Mr. Burke, on terms of the easiest intimacy. If flattery could

have spoiled him, he had enough, as in England, for whatever reason, his character always stood higher than in his own country.

Dr. Beattie's person was rather above the middle size. His countenance was very mild, and his smile uncommonly placid and benign. His eyes were remarkably piercing and expressive, and there was a general composure in his features which Sir Joshua Reynolds has given so admirably in his picture, that I recommended the head to be copied for the present edition, in preference to those which represent him in more advanced life.

His person was apparently stout and even robust, but this certainly was not the case. Its original conformation may have been that of strength and vigour; but he had frequent interruptions from sickness at a very early period of life. As he advanced, he discovered all the delicate and valetudinary temperament of genius. At the age of forty-five he had the walk and manner and precautions that are usually observable at sixty, and was much afflicted with head-achs and other symptoms that are commonly called nervous. When I saw him on his last visit to London, he seemed painfully affected by sudden noises of any kind, and was particularly averse to the bustle of the London streets. There was evidently a great portion of irritability in his habit. That this was precipitated by the loss of his domestic endearments, cannot be doubted; but the primary cause must be sought in his application to study, which at all times of his life, but particularly in his youth, was too close, and absolutely inconsistent with a healthy habit of body. Of this he was so sensible, that it appears to have been his constant object to prevent his son from falling into the same error; and I received some letters from him many years ago on the subject, in which he strongly deprecates an unremitting attention to books.

The Life of Dr. Beattie, published since the first edition of

the present sketch, appeared in 1803, exhibits him in the character of an epistolary writer. His letters embrace a very large portion of the literary history of his time, but it may be doubted whether they have always the ease and vivacity which are expected in this species of composition. They are valuable, however, as exhibiting many lesser traits of character, and as disclosing its lesser infirmities.

I have thus given the facts of Dr. Beattie's literary life, and public services, and have attempted to sketch his personal character, the latter, perhaps, some may observe, with a friendly hand. I know not, however, in what other manner to execute what has been intrusted to me. I revere him as an ornament to his country; I remember him with the tenderest affection as my tutor and my friend. The press is open to those who would expose his failings; I have endeavoured to recollect them, but cannot.

A. C.

TO

MRS. MONTAGU,

THESE

LITTLE POEMS,

NOW REVISED AND CORRECTED, FOR THE LAST TIME,

ARE,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF ESTEEM AND GRATITUDE,

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

JANUARY 1777.

HAVING lately seen in print some poems ascribed to me, which I never wrote, and some of my own inaccurately copied, I thought it would not be improper to publish, in this little volume, all the verses of which I am willing to be considered as the author. Many others I did indeed write in the early part of my life; but they were in general so incorrect, that I would not rescue them from oblivion, even if a wish could do it.

Some of the few now offered to the Public would perhaps have been suppressed, if in making this collection I had implicitly followed my own judgment. But in so small a matter, who would refuse to submit his opinion to that of a friend?

It is of no consequence to the reader to know the date of any of these little poems. But some private reasons determined the Author to add, that most of them were written many years ago, and that the greater part of the MINSTREL, which is his latest attempt in this way, was composed in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight.

PREFACE

TO

THE MINSTREL.

THE design was, to trace the progress of a Poetical Genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as a MINSTREL, that is, as an itinerant Poet and Musician;—a character which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable, but sacred.

I have endeavoured to imitate SPENSER in the measure of his verse, and in the harmony, simplicity, and variety of his composition. Antique expressions I have avoided; admitting, however, some old words, where they seemed to suit the subject: but I hope none will be found that are now obsolete, or in any degree not intelligible to a reader of English poetry.

To those, who may be disposed to ask, what could induce me to write in so difficult a measure, I can only answer, that it pleases my ear, and seems, from its Gothic structure and original, to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the Poem. It admits both simplicity and magnificence of sound and of language, beyond any other stanza that I am acquainted with. It allows the sententiousness of the couplet, as well as the more complex modulation of blank verse. What some critics have remarked, of its uniformity growing at last tiresome to the ear, will be found to hold true, only when the Poetry is faulty in other respects.

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E.F. Burney del. *I. Fittler sculp.*

Listening with pleasing dread to the deep roar
Of the wide-weltering waves. ——

Minstrel. Book I. ver. LIV.

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POEMS,

OF

JAMES BEATTIE, D.D.

ODE TO PEACE.

I. 1.

PEACE, heaven-descended maid! whose powerful voice
From ancient darkness call'd the morn,
Of jarring elements compos'd the noise;
When Chaos from his old dominion torn,
With all his bellowing throng,
Far, far was hurl'd the void abyss along:
And all the bright angelic choir
To loftiest raptures tuned the heavenly lyre,
Pour'd in loud symphony th' impetuous strain;
And every fiery orb and planet sung,
And wide through night's dark desolate domain
Rebounding long and deep the lays triumphant rung.

I. 2.

Oh whither art thou fled, Saturnian reign!
Roll round again, majestic years!
To break fell Tyranny's corroding chain,
From Woe's wan cheek to wipe the bitter tears,
Ye years, again roll round!
Hark from afar what loud tumultuous sound,
While echoes sweep the winding vales,
Swells full along the plains, and loads the gales!
Murder deep-rous'd, with the wild whirlwind's haste
And roar of tempest, from her cavern springs,
Her tangled serpents girds around her waist,
Smiles ghastly-stern, and shakes her gore-distilling wings.

I. 3.

Fierce up the yielding skies
The shouts redoubling rise:
Earth shudders at the dreadful sound,
And all is listening trembling round.
Torrents, that from yon promontory's head
Dash'd furious down in desperate cascade,
Heard from afar amid the lonely night
That oft have led the wanderer right,
Are silent at the noise.
The mighty ocean's more majestic voice
Drown'd in superior din is heard no more;
The surge in silence sweeps along the foamy shore.

II. 1.

The bloody banner streaming in the air
Seen on yon sky-mix'd mountain's brow,
The mingling multitudes, the madding car
Pouring impetuous on the plain below,
War's dreadful lord proclaim.
Bursts out by frequent fits th' expansive flame.
Whirl'd in tempestuous eddies flies
The surging smoke o'er all the darken'd skies.
The cheerful face of Heaven no more is seen,
Fades the morn's vivid blush to deadly pale,
The bat flits transient o'er the dusky green,
Night's shrieking birds along the sullen twilight sail.

II. 2.

Involv'd in fire-streak'd gloom the car comes on.
The mangled steeds grim Terrour guides.
His forehead writh'd to a relentless frown,
Aloft the angry power of battles rides:
Grasp'd in his mighty hand
A mace tremendous desolates the land;
Thunders the turret down the steep,
The mountain shrinks before its wasteful sweep:
Chill horrour the dissolving limbs invades;
Smit by the blasting lightning of his eyes,
A bloated paleness beauty's bloom o'erspreads,
Fades every flowery field, and every verdure dies.

II. 3.

How startled Phrenzy stares,
Bristling her ragged hairs!
Revenge the gory fragment gnaws;
See, with her griping vulture-claws
Imprinted deep, she rends the opening wound!
Hatred her torch blue-streaming tosses round;
The shrieks of agony, and clang of arms
Re-echo to the fierce alarms
Her trump terrific blows.
Disparting from behind, the clouds disclose
Of kingly gesture a gigantic form,
That with his scourge sublime directs the whirling storm.

III. 1.

Ambition, outside fair! within more foul
Than fellest fiend from Tartarus sprung,
In caverns hatch'd, where the fierce torrents roll
Of Phlegethon, the burning banks along,
Yon naked waste survey:
Where late was heard the flute's mellifluous lay;
Where late the rosy-bosom'd Hours
In loose array danced lightly o'er the flowers;
Where late the shepherd told his tender tale;
And wak'd by the soft-murmuring breeze of morn
The voice of cheerful labour fill'd the dale;
And dove-eyed Plenty smil'd, and wav'd her liberal horn.

III. 2.

Yon ruins sable from the wasting flame
But mark the once resplendent dome;
The frequent corse obstructs the sullen stream,
And ghosts glare horrid from the sylvan gloom.
How sadly-silent all!
Save where outstretch'd beneath yon hanging wall
Pale Famine moans with feeble breath,
And Torture yells, and grinds her bloody teeth—
Though vain the Muse, and every melting lay,
To touch thy heart, unconscious of remorse!
Know, monster, know, thy hour is on the way,
I see, I see the years begin their mighty course.

III. 3.

What scenes of glory rise
Before my dazzled eyes!
Young Zephyrs wave their wanton wings,
And melody celestial rings:
Along the lilied lawn the nymphs advance
Flush'd with love's bloom, and range the sprightly dance:
The gladsome shepherds on the mountain-side
Array'd in all their rural pride
Exalt the festive note,
Inviting Echo from her inmost grot—
But ah! the landscape glows with fainter light,
It darkens, swims, and flies for ever from my sight.

IV. 1.

Illusions vain! Can sacred Peace reside,
Where sordid gold the breast alarms,
Where cruelty inflames the eye of Pride,
And Grandeur wantons in soft Pleasure's arms!
Ambition! these are thine:
These from the soul erase the form divine;
These quench the animating fire,
That warms the bosom with sublime desire.
Thence the relentless heart forgets to feel,
Hate rides tremendous on th' o'erwhelming brow,
And midnight-Rancour grasps the cruel steel,
Blaze the funereal flames, and sound the shrieks of Woe.

IV. 2.

From Albion fled, thy once-belov'd retreat,
What region brightens in thy smile,
Creative Peace, and underneath thy feet
Sees sudden flowers adorn the rugged soil?
In bleak Siberia blows
Wak'd by thy genial breath the balmy rose?
Wav'd over by thy magic wand
Does life inform fell Lybia's burning sand?
Or does some isle thy parting flight detain,
Where roves the Indian through primeval shades:
Haunts the pure pleasures of the woodland reign,
And led by reason's ray the path of Nature treads?

IV. 3.

On Cuba's utmost steep*
Far leaning o'er the deep
The goddess' pensive form was seen.
Her robe of Nature's varied green
Wav'd on the gale; grief dim'd her radiant eyes,
Her swelling bosom heav'd with boding sighs:
She eyed the main; where, gaining on the view,
Emerging from th' ethereal blue,
Midst the dread pomp of war
Gleam'd the Iberian streamer from afar.
She saw; and on refulgent pinions born
Slow wing'd her way sublime, and mingled with the morn.

* This alludes to the discovery of America by the Spaniards under Columbus. These ravagers are said to have made their first descent on the islands in the gulph of Florida, of which Cuba is one.

THE

TRIUMPH OF MELANCHOLY.

MEMORY, be still! why throng upon the thought
These scenes deep-stain'd with Sorrow's sable dye?
Hast thou in store no joy-illumin'd draught,
To cheer bewilder'd Fancy's tearful eye?

Yes—from afar a landscape seems to rise,
Deckt gorgeous by the lavish hand of Spring;
Thin gilded clouds float light along the skies,
And laughing Loves disport on fluttering wing.

How blest the youth in yonder valley laid!
Soft smiles in every conscious feature play,
While to the gale low-murmuring through the glade
He tempers sweet his sprightly-warbling lay.

Hail Innocence! whose bosom all serene,
Feels not fierce passion's raving tempest roll!
Oh ne'er may Care distract that placid mien!
Oh ne'er may Doubt's dark shades o'erwhelm thy soul!

Vain wish! for lo, in gay attire conceal'd
Yonder she comes! the heart-inflaming fiend!
(Will no kind power the helpless stripling shield!)
Swift to her destin'd prey see Passion bend!

Oh smile accurst to hide the worst designs!
Now with blithe eye she wooes him to be blest,
While round her arm unseen a serpent twines—
And lo, she hurls it hissing at his breast!

And, instant, lo, his dizzy eye-ball swims
Ghastly, and reddening darts a threatful glare;
Pain with strong grasp distorts his writhing limbs,
And Fear's cold hand erects his bristling hair!

Is this, O life, is this thy boasted prime!
And does thy spring no happier prospect yield!
Why gilds the vernal sun thy gaudy clime,
When nipping mildews waste the flowery field!

How memory pains! Let some gay theme beguile
The musing mind, and sooth to soft delight.
Ye images of woe, no more recoil;
Be life's past scenes wrapt in oblivious night.

Now when fierce Winter, arm'd with wasteful power,
Heaves the wild deep that thunders from afar,
How sweet to sit in this sequester'd bower,
To hear, and but to hear, the mingling war!

Ambition here displays no gilded toy
That tempts on desperate wing the soul to rise,
Nor Pleasure's flower-embroider'd paths decoy,
Nor Anguish lurks in Grandeur's gay disguise.

Oft has Contentment cheer'd this lone abode
With the mild languish of her smiling eye;
Here Health has oft in blushing beauty glow'd,
While loose-robed Quiet stood enamour'd by.

E'en the storm lulls to more profound repose:
The storm these humble walls assails in vain;
Screen'd is the lily when the whirlwind blows,
While the oak's stately ruin strows the plain.

Blow on, ye winds! Thine, Winter, be the skies,
Roll the old ocean, and the vales lay waste:
Nature thy momentary rage defies;
To her relief the gentler seasons haste.

Throned in her emerald-car see Spring appear!
(As Fancy wills the landscape starts to view)
Her emerald-car the youthful Zephyrs bear,
Fanning her bosom with their pinions blue.

Around the jocund Hours are fluttering seen;
And lo, her rod the rose-lip'd power extends!
And lo, the lawns are deckt in living green,
And Beauty's bright-eyed train from Heaven descends!

Haste, happy days, and make all nature glad—
But will all nature joy at your return?
Say, can ye cheer pale Sickness' gloomy bed,
Or dry the tears that bathe th' untimely urn?

Will ye one transient ray of gladness dart
Cross the dark cell where hopeless slavery lies?
To ease tir'd Disappointment's bleeding heart,
Will all your stores of softening balm suffice?

When fell Oppression in his harpy-fangs
From Want's weak grasp the last sad morsel bears,
Can ye allay the heart-wrung parent's pangs,
Whose famish'd child craves help with fruitless tears?

For ah! thy reign, Oppression, is not past.
Who from the shivering limbs the vestment rends?
Who lays the once-rejoicing village waste,
Bursting the ties of lovers and of friends?

O ye, to Pleasure who resign the day,
As loose in Luxury's clasping arms you lie,
O yet let pity in your breast bear sway,
And learn to melt at Misery's moving cry.

But hopest thou, Muse, vainglorious as thou art,
With the weak impulse of thy humble strain,
Hopest thou to soften Pride's obdurate heart,
When Errol's bright example shines in vain?

Then cease the theme. Turn, Fancy, turn thine eye,
Thy weeping eye, nor further urge thy flight;
Thy haunts, alas! no gleams of joy supply,
Or transient gleams, that flash, and sink in night.

Yet fain the mind its anguish would forego—
Spread then, historic Muse, thy pictur'd scroll;
Bid thy great scenes in all their splendour glow,
And swell to thought sublime th' exalted soul.

What mingling pomps rush boundless on the gaze!
What gallant navies ride the heaving deep!
What glittering towns their cloud-wrapt turrets raise!
What bulwarks frown horrific o'er the steep!

Bristling with spears, and bright with burnish'd shields,
Th' embattled legions stretch their long array;
Discord's red torch, as fierce she scours the fields,
With bloody tincture stains the face of day.

And now the hosts in silence wait the sign.
How keen their looks whom Liberty inspires!
Quick as the goddess darts along the line,
Each breast impatient burns with noble fires.

Her form how graceful! In her lofty mien
The smiles of Love stern Wisdom's frown controul;
Her fearless eye, determin'd though serene,
Speaks the great purpose, and th' unconquer'd soul.

Mark, where Ambition leads the adverse band,
Each feature fierce and haggard, as with pain!
With menace loud he cries, while from his hand
He vainly strives to wipe the crimson stain.

Lo, at his call, impetuous as the storms,
Headlong to deeds of death the hosts are driven;
Hatred to madness wrought, each face deforms,
Mounts the black whirlwind, and involves the heaven.

Now, Virtue, now thy powerful succour lend,
Shield them for Liberty who dare to die—
Ah Liberty! will none thy cause befriend!
Are these thy sons, thy generous sons that fly!

Not virtue's self, when heaven its aid denies,
Can brace the loosen'd nerves, or warm the heart;
Not Virtue's self can still the burst of sighs,
When festers in the soul Misfortune's dart.

See, where by heaven-bred terror all dismay'd
The scattering legions pour along the plain.
Ambition's car with bloody spoils array'd
Hews its broad way, as Vengeance guides the rein.

But who is he, that, by yon lonely brook
With woods o'erhung and precipices rude,*
Abandon'd lies, and with undaunted look
Sees streaming from his breast the purple flood?

Ah Brutus! ever thine be Virtue's tear!
Lo, his dim eyes to Liberty he turns,
As scarce-supported on her broken spear
O'er her expiring son the goddess mourns.

* Such, according to the description given by Plutarch, was the scene of Brutus's death.

Loose to the wind her azure mantle flies,
From her dishevel'd locks she rends the plume;
No lustre lightens in her weeping eyes,
And on her tear-stain'd cheek no roses bloom.

Meanwhile the world, Ambition, owns thy sway,
Fame's loudest trumpet labours in thy praise,
For thee the Muse awakes her sweetest lay,
And Flattery bids for thee her altars blaze.

Nor in life's lofty bustling sphere alone,
The sphere where monarchs and where heroes toil,
Sink Virtue's sons beneath Misfortune's frown,
While Guilt's thrill'd bosom leaps at Pleasure's smile;

Full oft, where Solitude and Silence dwell
Far, far remote amid the lowly plain,
Resounds the voice of Woe from Virtue's cell.
Such is man's doom, and Pity weeps in vain.

Still grief recoils—How vainly have I strove
Thy power, O Melancholy, to withstand!
Tir'd I submit; but yet, O yet remove,
Or ease the pressure of thy heavy hand.

Yet for a while let the bewilder'd soul
Find in society relief from woe;
O yield a while to Friendship's soft controul;
Some respite, Friendship, wilt thou not bestow!

Come, then, Philander! for thy lofty mind
Looks down from far on all that charms the great;
For thou canst bear, unshaken and resign'd,
The brightest smiles, the blackest frowns of Fate:

Come thou, whose love unlimited, sincere,
Nor faction cools, nor injury destroys;
Who lend'st to Misery's moans a pitying ear,
And feel'st with ecstacy another's joys:

Who know'st man's frailty; with a favouring eye,
And melting heart, behold'st a brother's fall;
Who, unenslav'd by custom's narrow tye,
With manly freedom follow'st reason's call.

And bring thy Delia, softly-smiling fair,
Whose spotless soul no sordid thoughts deform;
Her accents mild would still each throbbing care,
And harmonize the thunder of the storm:

Though blest with wisdom and with wit refin'd,
She courts not homage, nor desires to shine;
In her each sentiment sublime is join'd
To female sweetness, and a form divine.

Come, and dispel the deep-surrounding shade:
Let chasten'd mirth the social hours employ;
O catch the swift-wing'd hour before 'tis fled,
On swiftest pinion flies the hour of joy.

Even while the careless disencumber'd soul
Dissolving sinks to joy's oblivious dream,
Even then to time's tremendous verge we roll
With haste impetuous down life's surgy stream.

Can Gaiety the vanish'd years restore,
Or on the withering limbs fresh beauty shed,
Or sooth the sad inevitable hour,
Or cheer the dark dark mansions of the dead?

Still sounds the solemn knell in fancy's ear,
That call'd Cleora to the silent tomb;
To her how jocund roll'd the sprightly year!
How shone the nymph in beauty's brightest bloom!

Ah! Beauty's bloom avails not in the grave,
Youth's lofty mien, nor age's awful grace;
Moulder unknown the monarch and the slave,
Whelm'd in th' enormous wreck of human race.

The thought-fix'd portraiture, the breathing bust,
The arch with proud memorials array'd,
The long-liv'd pyramid shall sink in dust
To dumb oblivion's ever-desart shade.

Fancy from comfort wanders still astray.
Ah, Melancholy! how I feel thy power!
Long have I labour'd to elude thy sway!
But 'tis enough, for I resist no more.

The traveller thus, that o'er the midnight-waste
Through many a lonesome path is doom'd to roam,
Wilder'd and weary sits him down at last;
For long the night, and distant far his home.

EPITAPH

ON * * * * * * * * * * * *†

Escap'd the gloom of mortal life, a soul
Here leaves its mouldering tenement of clay,
Safe, where no cares their whelming billows roll,
No doubts bewilder, and no hopes betray.

Like thee, I once have stemm'd the sea of life;
Like thee, have languish'd after empty joys;
Like thee, have labour'd in the stormy strife;
Been griev'd for trifles, and amus'd with toys.

Yet for a while 'gainst Passion's threatful blast
Let steady Reason urge the struggling oar;
Shot through the dreary gloom the morn at last
Gives to thy longing eye the blissful shore.

Forget my frailties, thou art also frail;
Forgive my lapses, for thyself may'st fall;
Nor read unmov'd my artless tender tale,
I was a friend, O man, to thee, to all.

† James Beattie, this Epitaph was intended for himself. *C.*

EPITAPH.*

Nov. 1, 1757.

To this grave is committed
All that the grave can claim
Of two brothers * * * * * and * * * * * * * * *†
Who on the VII of October, MDCCLVII,
Both unfortunately perished in the * * * water:
The one in his XXII, the other in his XVIII year.
Their disconsolate father * * * * * * * * * * * *
Erects this monument to the memory of
These amiable youths;
Whose early virtues promised
Uncommon comfort to his declining years,
And singular emolument to society.

O thou! whose steps in sacred rev'rence tread
These lone dominions of the silent dead;

* This Epitaph is engraven on a tomb-stone in the church-yard of Lethnet, in the shire of Angus.

† Two young men of the name of Leitch, who were drowned in crossing the river Southesk. It is not very obvious why their names should be concealed in the first edition of these poems.

C.

On this sad stone a pious look bestow,
Nor uninstructed read this tale of woe;
And while the sigh of sorrow heaves thy breast,
Let each rebellious murmur be supprest;
Heav'n's hidden ways to trace, for us, how vain!
Heav'n's wise decrees, how impious, to arraign!
Pure from the stains of a polluted age,
In early bloom of life, they left the stage:
Not doom'd in lingering woe to waste their breath,
One moment snatch'd them from the power of Death:
They liv'd united, and united died;
Happy the friends, whom Death cannot divide!

ELEGY.

Tir'd with the busy crowds, that all the day
Impatient throng where Folly's altars flame,
My languid powers dissolve with quick decay,
'Till genial Sleep repair the sinking frame.

Hail, kind reviver! that canst lull the cares,
And every weary sense compose to rest,
Lighten th' oppressive load which anguish bears,
And warm with hope the cold desponding breast.

Touch'd by thy rod, from Power's majestic brow
Drops the gay plume; he pines a lowly clown;
And on the cold earth stretch'd the son of Woe
Quaffs Pleasure's draught, and wears a fancied crown.

When rous'd by thee, on boundless pinions born
Fancy to fairy scenes exults to rove,
Now scales the cliff gay-gleaming on the morn,
Now sad and silent treads the deepening grove;

Or skims the main, and listens to the storms,
Marks the long waves roll far remote away;
Or mingling with ten thousand glittering forms,
Floats on the gale, and basks in purest day.

Haply, ere long, pierc'd by the howling blast
Through dark and pathless deserts I shall roam,
Plunge down th' unfathom'd deep, or shrink aghast
Where bursts the shrieking spectre from the tomb:

Perhaps loose Luxury's enchanting smile
Shall lure my steps to some romantic dale,
Where Mirth's light freaks th' unheeded hours beguile,
And airs of rapture warble in the gale.

Instructive emblem of this mortal state!
Where scenes as various every hour arise
In swift succession, which the hand of Fate
Presents, then snatches from our wondering eyes.

Be taught, vain man, how fleeting all thy joys,
Thy boasted grandeur, and thy glittering store;
Death comes, and all thy fancied bliss destroys,
Quick as a dream it fades, and is no more.

And, sons of Sorrow! though the threatening storm
Of angry Fortune overhang a while,
Let not her frowns your inward peace deform;
Soon happier days in happier climes shall smile.

Through Earth's throng'd visions while we toss forlorn,
'Tis tumult all, and rage, and restless strife;
But these shall vanish like the dreams of morn,
When Death awakes us to immortal life.

SONG,

IN IMITATION OF SHAKESPEAR'S

Blow, blow, thou winter wind, &c.

Blow, blow, thou vernal gale!
Thy balm will not avail
To ease my aching breast;
Though thou the billows smooth,
Thy murmurs cannot sooth
My weary soul to rest.

Flow, flow, thou tuneful stream!
Infuse the easy dream
Into the peaceful soul;
But thou canst not compose
The tumult of my woes,
Though soft thy waters roll.

Blush, blush, ye fairest flowers!
Beauties surpassing yours
My Rosalind adorn;
Nor is the Winter's blast,
That lays your glories waste,
So killing as her scorn.

Breathe, breathe, ye tender lays,
That linger down the maze
Of yonder winding grove;
O let your soft controul
Bend her relenting soul
To pity and to love.

Fade, fade, ye flowrets fair!
Gales, fan no more the air!
Ye streams forget to glide!
Be hush'd, each vernal strain;
Since nought can sooth my pain,
Nor mitigate her pride.

RETIREMENT.

1758.

When in the crimson cloud of even
The lingering light decays,
And Hesper on the front of Heaven
His glittering gem displays;
Deep in the silent vale, unseen,
Beside a lulling stream,
A pensive youth, of placid mien,
Indulg'd this tender theme.

"Ye cliffs, in hoary grandeur pil'd
High o'er the glimmering dale;
Ye woods, along whose windings wild
Murmurs the solemn gale:
Where Melancholy strays forlorn,
And Woe retires to weep,
What time the wan Moon's yellow horn
Gleams on the western deep:

"To you, ye wastes, whose artless charms
Ne'er drew ambition's eye,
Scap'd a tumultuous world's alarms,
To your retreats I fly.

Deep in your most sequester'd bower
Let me at last recline,
Where Solitude, mild, modest power,
Leans on her ivy'd shrine.

" How shall I woo thee, matchless fair!
Thy heavenly smile how win!
Thy smile that smooths the brow of Care,
And stills the storm within.
O wilt thou to thy favourite grove
Thine ardent votary bring,
And bless his hours, and bid them move
Serene, on silent wing!

" Oft let Remembrance sooth his mind
With dreams of former days,
When in the lap of Peace reclin'd
He fram'd his infant lays;
When Fancy rov'd at large, nor Care
Nor cold Distrust alarm'd,
Nor Envy with malignant glare
His simple youth had harm'd.

" 'Twas then, O Solitude! to thee
His early vows were paid,
From heart sincere, and warm, and free,
Devoted to the shade.
Ah why did Fate his steps decoy
In stormy paths to roam,

Remote from all congenial joy!—
O take the wanderer home.

"Thy shades, thy silence now be mine,
Thy charms my only theme;
My haunt the hollow cliff, whose pine
Waves o'er the gloomy stream.
Whence the scar'd owl on pinions gray
Breaks from the rustling boughs,
And down the lone vale sails away
To more profound repose.

"O, while to thee the woodland pours
Its wildly warbling song,
And balmy from the bank of flowers
The Zephyr breathes along;
Let no rude sound invade from far,
No vagrant foot be nigh,
No ray from Grandeur's gilded car,
Flash on the startled eye.

"But if some pilgrim through the glade
Thy hallow'd bowers explore,
O guard from harm his hoary head,
And listen to his lore;
For he of joys divine shall tell,
That wean from earthly wo,
And triumph o'er the mighty spell
That chains his heart below.

" For me, no more the path invites
Ambition loves to tread;
No more I climb those toilsome heights
By guileful Hope misled;
Leaps my fond fluttering heart no more
To Mirth's enlivening strain;
For present pleasure soon is o'er,
And all the past is vain."

ELEGY,

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR

1758.

Still shall unthinking man substantial deem
The forms that fleet thro' life's deceitful dream?
Till at some stroke of Fate the vision flies,
And sad realities in prospect rise;
And, from elysian slumbers rudely torn,
The startled soul awakes, to think, and mourn.
O ye, whose hours in jocund train advance,
Whose spirits to the song of gladness dance,
Who flowery plains in endless pomp survey,
Glittering in beams of visionary day;

O, yet while Fate delays th' impending wo,
Be rous'd to thought, anticipate the blow;
Lest, like the lightning's glance, the sudden ill
Flash to confound, and penetrate to kill;
Lest, thus encompass'd with funereal gloom,
Like me, ye bend o'er some untimely tomb,
Pour your wild ravings in Night's frighted ear,
And half pronounce Heaven's sacred doom severe.

Wise, beauteous, good! O every grace combin'd,
That charms the eye, or captivates the mind!
Fresh, as the floweret opening on the morn,
Whose leaves bright drops of liquid pearl adorn!
Sweet, as the downy-pinion'd gale, that roves
To gather fragrance in Arabian groves!
Mild, as the melodies at close of day,
That heard remote along the vale decay!
Yet, why with these compar'd? What tints so fine,
What sweetness, mildness, can be match'd with thine?
Why roam abroad, since recollection true
Restores the lovely form to fancy's view?
Still let me gaze, and every care beguile,
Gaze on that cheek, where all the Graces smile;
That soul-expressing eye, benignly bright,
Where Meekness beams ineffable delight;
That brow, where Wisdom sits enthron'd serene,
Each feature forms, and dignifies the mien:
Still let me listen, while her words impart
The sweet effusions of the blameless heart,

Till all my soul, each tumult charm'd away,
Yields, gently led, to Virtue's easy sway.
By thee inspir'd, O Virtue, age is young,
And music warbles from the faultering tongue:
Thy ray creative cheers the clouded brow,
And decks the faded cheek with rosy glow,
Brightens the joyless aspect, and supplies
Pure heavenly lustre to the languid eyes:
But when youth's living bloom reflects thy beams,
Resistless on the view the glory streams,
Love, wonder, joy, alternately alarm,
And beauty dazzles with angelic charm.
Ah, whither fled! ye dear illusions, stay!
Lo, pale and silent lies the lovely clay.
How are the roses on that cheek decay'd,
Which late the purple light of youth display'd!
Health on her form each sprightly grace bestow'd:
With life and thought each speaking feature glow'd.
Fair was the blossom, soft the vernal sky;
Elate with hope we deem'd no tempest nigh:
When lo, a whirlwind's instantaneous gust
Left all its beauties withering in the dust.
Cold the soft hand, that sooth'd Wo's weary head!
And quench'd the eye, the pitying tear that shed!
And mute the voice, whose pleasing accents stole,
Infusing balm, into the rankled soul!
O Death, why arm with cruelty thy power,
And spare the idle weed, yet lop the flower!

Why fly thy shafts in lawless errour driven!
Is Virtue then no more the care of Heaven!
But peace, bold thought! be still, my bursting heart!
We, not Eliza, felt the fatal dart.
Escap'd the dungeon, does the slave complain,
Nor bless the friendly hand that broke the chain?
Say, pines not Virtue for the lingering morn,
On this dark wild condemn'd to roam forlorn!
Where Reason's meteor-rays, with sickly glow,
O'er the dun gloom a dreadful glimmering throw;
Disclosing dubious to th' affrighted eye
O'erwhelming mountains tottering from on high,
Black billowy deeps in storms perpetual toss'd,
And weary ways in wildering labyrinths lost.
O happy stroke, that burst the bonds of clay,
Darts through the rending gloom the blaze of day,
And wings the soul with boundless flight to soar,
Where dangers threat, and fears alarm no more.
Transporting thought! here let me wipe away
The tear of Grief and wake a bolder lay.
But ah! the swimming eye o'erflows anew;
Nor check the sacred drops to Pity due;
Lo, where in speechless, hopeless anguish, bend
O'er her lov'd dust, the parent, brother, friend!
How vain the hope of man! but cease thy strain,
Nor sorrow's dread solemnity profane;
Mix'd with yon drooping mourners, on her bier
In silence shed the sympathetic tear.

ODE TO HOPE.

I. 1.

O THOU, who glad'st the pensive soul,
More than Aurora's smile the swain forlorn,
Left all night long to mourn
Where desolation frowns, and tempests howl;
And shrieks of woe, as intermits the storm,
Far o'er the monstrous wilderness resound,
And cross the gloom darts many a shapeless form,
And many a fire-eyed visage glares around.
O come, and be once more my guest:
Come, for thou oft thy suppliant's vow hast heard,
And oft with smiles indulgent cheer'd
And sooth'd him into rest.

I. 2.

Smit by thy rapture-beaming eye
Deep flashing thro' the midnight of their mind,
The sable bands combin'd,
Where Fear's black banner bloats the troubled sky,

Appall'd retire. Suspicion hides her head,
Nor dares th' obliquely gleaming eyeball raise;
Despair, with gorgon-figured veil o'erspread,
Speeds to dark Phlegethon's detested maze.
Lo, startled at the heavenly ray,
With speed unwonted Indolence upsprings,
And, heaving, lifts her leaden wings,
And sullen glides away:

I. 3.

Ten thousand forms, by pining Fancy view'd,
Dissolve.—Above the sparkling flood
When Phœbus rears his awful brow,
From lengthening lawn and valley low
The troops of fen-born mists retire.
Along the plain
The joyous swain
Eyes the gay villages again,
And gold-illumin'd spire;
While on the billowy ether borne
Floats the loose lay's jovial measure;
And light along the fairy Pleasure,
Her green robes glittering to the morn,
Wantons on silken wing. And goblins all
To the damp dungeon shrink, or hoary hall,
Or westward, with impetuous flight,
Shoot to the desert realms of their congenial night.

II. 1.

When first on childhood's eager gaze
Life's varied landscape, stretch'd immense around,
Starts out of night profound,
Thy voice incites to tempt th' untrodden maze.
Fond he surveys thy mild maternal face,
His bashful eye still kindling as he views,
And, while thy lenient arm supports his pace,
With beating heart the upland path pursues:
The path that leads, where, hung sublime,
And seen afar, youth's gallant trophies, bright
In Fancy's rainbow ray, invite
His wingy nerves to climb.

II. 2.

Pursue thy pleasurable way,
Safe in the guidance of thy heavenly guard,
While melting airs are heard
And soft-eyed cherub-forms around thee play:
Simplicity, in careless flowers array'd,
Prattling amusive in his accent meek;
And Modesty, half turning as afraid,
The smile just dimpling on his glowing cheek!
Content and Leisure, hand in hand
With Innocence and Peace, advance, and sing;
And Mirth, in many a mazy ring,
Frisks o'er the flowery land.

II. 3.

Frail man, how various is thy lot below!
To day tho' gales propitious blow,
And Peace soft gliding down the sky
Lead Love along, and Harmony,
To-morrow the gay scene deforms;
Then all around
The thunder's sound
Rolls rattling on through Heaven's profound,
And down rush all the storms.
Ye days, that balmy influence shed,
When sweet childhood, ever sprightly,
In paths of pleasure sported lightly,
Whither, ah whither are ye fled?
Ye cherub train, that brought him on his way,
O leave him not midst tumult and dismay;
For now youth's eminence he gains:
But what a weary length of lingering toil remains!

III. 1.

They shrink, they vanish into air,
Now Slander taints with pestilence the gale;
And mingling cries assail,
The wail of Woe, and groan of grim despair.
Lo, wizard Envy from his serpent eye
Darts quick destruction in each baleful glance;

Pride smiling stern, and yellow Jealousy,
Frowning Disdain, and haggard Hate advance;
Behold, amidst the dire array,
Pale wither'd Care, his giant-stature rears,
And lo, his iron hand prepares
To grasp its feeble prey.

III. 2.

Who now will guard bewilder'd youth
Safe from the fierce assault of hostile rage?
Such war can Virtue wage,
Virtue, that bears the sacred shield of Truth?
Alas! full oft on Guilt's victorious car,
The spoils of Virtue are in triumph borne;
While the fair captive, mark'd with many a scar,
In long obscurity, oppress'd, forlorn,
Resigns to tears her angel form.
Ill-fated youth, then whither wilt thou fly?
No friend, no shelter now is nigh,
And onward rolls the storm.

III. 3.

But whence the sudden beam that shoots along?
Why shrink aghast the hostile throng?
Lo, from amidst affliction's night,
Hope bursts all radiant on the sight:

Her words the troubled bosom sooth.
" Why thus dismay'd?
Though foes invade,
Hope ne'er is wanting to their aid,
Who tread the path of truth.
'Tis I, who smooth the rugged way,
I, who close the eyes of Sorrow,
And with glad visions of to-morrow
Repair the weary soul's decay.
When Death's cold touch thrills to the freezing heart,
Dreams of Heaven's opening glories I impart,
Till the freed spirit springs on high
In rapture too severe for weak mortality."

PYGMÆO-GERANO-MACHIA:

THE

BATTLE OF THE PYGMIES AND CRANES.

FROM THE LATIN OF ADDISON.

1762.

THE pigmy-people, and the feather'd train,
Mingling in mortal combat on the plain,
I sing. Ye Muses, favour my designs,
Lead on my squadrons, and arrange the lines;
The flashing swords and fluttering wings display,
And long bills nibbling in the bloody fray;
Cranes darting with disdain on tiny foes,
Conflicting birds and men, and war's unnumber'd woes.

The wars and woes of heroes six feet long
Have oft resounded in Pierian song.
Who has not heard of Colchos' golden fleece,
And Argo mann'd with all the flower of Greece?
Of Thebes' fell brethren, Theseus stern of face,
And Peleus' son unrivall'd in the race,

Eneas, founder of the Roman line,
And William, glorious on the banks of Boyne?
Who has not learn'd to weep at Pompey's woes,
And over Blackmore's epic page to doze?
'Tis I, who dare attempt unusual strains,
Of hosts unsung, and unfrequented plains;
The small shrill trump, and chiefs of little size,
And armies rushing down the darken'd skies.

Where India reddens to the early dawn,
Winds a deep vale from vulgar eye withdrawn:
Bosom'd in groves the lowly region lies,
And rocky mountains round the border rise.
Here, till the doom of fate its fall decreed,
The empire flourish'd of the pygmy-breed;
Here Industry perform'd, and Genius plann'd,
And busy multitudes o'erspread the land.
But now to these lone bounds if pilgrim stray,
Tempting through craggy cliffs the desperate way.
He finds the puny mansion fallen to earth,
Its godlings mouldering on th' abandon'd hearth;
And starts, where small white bones are spread around,
"Or little footsteps lightly print the ground;"
While the proud crane her nest securely builds,
Chattering amid the desolated fields.

But different fates befel her hostile rage,
While reign'd, invincible thro' many an age,
The dreaded pygmy: rous'd by war's alarms
Forth rush'd the madding mannikin to arms.

Fierce to the field of death the hero flies;
The faint crane fluttering flaps the ground, and dies;
And by the victor borne (o'erwhelming load!)
With bloody bill loose-dangling marks the road.
And oft the wily dwarf in ambush lay,
And often made the callow young his prey;
With slaughter'd victims heap'd his board, and smil'd,
T' avenge the parent's trespass on the child.
Oft, where his feather'd foe had rear'd her nest,
And laid her eggs and household gods to rest,
Burning for blood, in terrible array,
The eighteen-inch militia burst their way;
All went to wreck; the infant foeman fell,
Whence scarce his chirping bill had broke the shell.
Loud uproar hence, and rage of arms arose,
And the fell rancour of encountering foes;
Hence dwarfs and cranes one general havoc whelms,
And Death's grim visage scares the pigmy-realms.
Not half so furious blaz'd the warlike fire
Of mice, high theme of the Meonian lyre;
When bold to battle march'd th' accouter'd frogs,
And the deep tumult thunder'd through the bogs,
Pierc'd by the javelin bulrush on the shore
Here agonizing roll'd the mouse in gore;
And there the frog (a scene full sad to see!)
Shorn of one leg, slow sprawl'd along on three:
He vaults no more with vigorous hops on high,
But mourns in hoarsest croaks his destiny.

And now the day of woe drew on apace,
A day of woe to all the pygmy-race,
When dwarfs were doom'd (but penitence was vain)
To rue each broken egg, and chicken slain.
For, rous'd to vengeance by repeated wrong,
From distant climes the long-bill'd legions throng:
From Strymon's lake, Cäyster's plashy meads,
And fens of Scythia, green with rustling reeds,
From where the Danube winds thro' many a land,
And Mareotis laves th' Egyptian strand,
To rendezvous they waft on eager wing,
And wait assembled the returning spring.
Meanwhile they trim their plumes for length of flight,
Whet their keen beaks, and twisting claws, for fight;
Each crane the pygmy power in thought o'erturns,
And every bosom for the battle burns.

When genial gales the frozen air unbind,
The screaming legions wheel, and mount the wind;
Far in the sky they form their long array,
And land and ocean stretch'd immense survey
Deep deep beneath; and, triumphing in pride,
With clouds and winds commix'd, innumerous ride:
'Tis wild obstreperous clangour all, and heaven
Whirls, in tempestuous undulation driven.

Nor less th' alarm that shook the world below,
Where march'd in pomp of war th' embattled foe:
Where mannikins with haughty step advance,
And grasp the shield, and couch the quivering lance:

To right and left the lengthening lines they form,
And rank'd in deep array await the storm.
High in the midst the chieftain-dwarf was seen,
Of giant stature, and imperial mien:
Full twenty inches tall, he strode along,
And view'd with lofty eye the wondering throng;
And while with many a scar his visage frown'd,
Bared his broad bosom, rough with many a wound
Of beaks and claws, disclosing to their sight
The glorious meed of high heroic might.
For with insatiate vengeance, he pursu'd,
And never-ending hate, the feathery brood.
Unhappy they, confiding in the length
Of horny beak, or talon's crooked strength,
Who durst abide his rage; the blade descends,
And from the panting trunk the pinion rends:
Laid low in dust the pinion waves no more,
The trunk disfigur'd stiffens in its gore.
What hosts of heroes fell beneath his force!
What heaps of chicken carnage mark'd his course!
How oft, O Strymon, thy lone banks along,
Did wailing Echo waft the funeral song!
And now from far the mingling clamours rise,
Loud and more loud rebounding through the skies.
From skirt to skirt of Heaven, with stormy sway,
A cloud rolls on, and darkens all the day.
Near and more near descends the dreadful shade,
And now in battailous array display'd,

On sounding wings, and screaming in their ire,
The cranes rush onward, and the fight require.
The pygmy warriors eye with fearless glare
The host thick swarming o'er the burthen'd air;
Thick swarming now, but to their native land
Doom'd to return a scanty straggling band.—
When sudden, darting down the depth of Heaven,
Fierce on th' expecting foe the cranes are driven,
The kindling phrensy every bosom warms,
The region echoes to the crash of arms:
Loose feathers from th' encountering armies fly,
And in careering whirlwinds mount the sky.
To breathe from toil upsprings the panting crane,
Then with fresh vigour downward darts again.
Success in equal balance hovering hangs.
Here, on the sharp spear, mad with mortal pangs,
The bird transfix'd in bloody vortex whirls,
Yet fierce in death the threatening talon curls;
There, while the life-blood bubbles from his wound,
With little feet the pygmy beats the ground;
Deep from his breast the short short sob he draws,
And dying curses the keen-pointed claws.
Trembles the thundering field, thick cover'd o'er
With falchions, mangled wings, and streaming gore,
And pygmy arms, and beaks of ample size,
And here a claw, and there a finger lies.
Encompass'd round with heaps of slaughter'd foes,
All grim in blood the pygmy champion glows.

And on th' assailing host impetuous springs,
Careless of nibbling bills, and flapping wings;
And midst the tumult wheresoe'er he turns,
The battle with redoubled fury burns;
From ev'ry side th' avenging cranes amain
Throng, to o'erwhelm this terrour of the plain.
When suddenly (for such the will of Jove)
A fowl enormous, sousing from above,
The gallant chieftain clutch'd, and, soaring high,
(Sad chance of battle!) bore him up the sky.
The cranes pursue, and clustering in a ring,
Chatter triumphant round the captive king.
But ah! what pangs each pygmy bosom wrung,
When, now to cranes a prey, on talons hung,
High in the clouds they saw their helpless lord,
His wriggling form still lessening as he soar'd.

Lo! yet again, with unabated rage,
In mortal strife the mingling hosts engage.
The crane with darted bill assaults the foe,
Hovering; then wheels aloft to scape the blow:
The dwarf in anguish aims the vengeful wound;
But whirls in empty air the falchion round.

Such was the scene, when midst the loud alarms
Sublime th' eternal Thunderer rose in arms.
When Briareus, by mad ambition driven,
Heav'd Pelion huge, and hurl'd it high at Heaven.
Jove roll'd redoubling thunders from on high,
Mountains and bolts encounter'd in the sky;

Till one stupendous ruin whelm'd the crew,
Their vast limbs weltering wide in brimstone blue.
But now at length the pygmy legions yield,
And wing'd with terrour fly the fatal field.
They raise a weak and melancholy wail,
All in distraction scattering o'er the vale.
Prone on their routed rear the cranes descend;
Their bills bite furious, and their talons rend:
With unrelenting ire they urge the chace,
Sworn to exterminate the hated race.
'Twas thus the pygmy name, once great in war,
For spoils of conquer'd cranes renown'd afar,
Perish'd. For, by the dread decree of Heaven,
Short is the date to earthly grandeur given,
And vain are all attempts to roam beyond
Where fate has fix'd the everlasting bound.
Fallen are the trophies of Assyrian power,
And Persia's proud dominion is no more;
Yea, though to both superior far in fame,
Thine empire, Latium, is an empty name.
And now with lofty chiefs of ancient time,
The pygmy heroes roam th' elysian clime.
Or, if belief to matron-tales be due,
Full oft, in the belated shepherd's view,
Their frisking forms, in gentle green array'd,
Gambol secure amid the moonlight glade.
Secure, for no alarming cranes molest,
And all their woes in long oblivion rest:

Down the deep vale, and narrow winding way,
They foot it featly, rang'd in ringlets gay:
'Tis joy and frolic all, where'er they rove,
And Fairy-people is the name they love.

THE HARES.

A FABLE.

YES, yes, I grant the sons of Earth
Are doom'd to trouble from their birth.
We all of sorrow have our share;
But say, is yours without compare?
Look round the world; perhaps you'll find
Each individual of our kind
Press'd with an equal load of ill,
Equal at least. Look further still,
And own your lamentable case
Is little short of happiness.
In yonder hut that stands alone
Attend to Famine's feeble moan;
Or view the couch where Sickness lies,
Mark his pale cheek, and languid eyes,

His frame by strong convulsion torn,
His struggling sighs, and looks forlorn.
Or see, transfix'd with keener pangs,
Where o'er his hoard the miser hangs;
Whistles the wind; he starts, he stares,
Nor Slumber's balmy blessing shares;
Despair, Remorse, and Terror roll
Their tempests on his harass'd soul.
But here perhaps it may avail
T' enforce our reasoning with a tale.
Mild was the morn, the sky serene,
The jolly hunting band convene,
The beagle's breast with ardour burns,
The bounding steed the champaign spurns,
And Fancy oft the game descries
Thro' the hound's nose, and huntsman's eyes.
Just then, a council of the hares
Had met, on national affairs.
The chiefs were set; while o'er their head
The furze its frizzled covering spread.
Long lists of grievances were heard,
And general discontent appear'd.
" Our harmless race shall every savage
Both quadruped and biped ravage?
Shall horses, hounds, and hunters still
Unite their wits to work us ill?
The youth, his parent's sole delight,
Whose tooth the dewy lawns invite,

Whose pulse in every vein beats strong,
Whose limbs leap light the vales along,
May yet ere noontide meet his death,
And lie dismember'd on the heath.
For youth, alas, nor cautious age,
Nor strength, nor speed, eludes their rage.
In every field we meet the foe,
Each gale comes fraught with sounds of woe;
The morning but awakes our fears,
The evening sees us bath'd in tears.
But must we ever idly grieve,
Nor strive our fortunes to relieve?
Small is each individual's force:
To stratagem be our recourse;
And then, from all our tribes combin'd,
The murderer to his cost may find
No foes are weak, whom Justice arms,
Whom Concord leads, and Hatred warms.
Be rous'd; or liberty acquire,
Or in the great attempt expire."
He said no more, for in his breast
Conflicting thoughts the voice suppress'd:
The fire of vengeance seem'd to stream
From his swoln eyeball's yellow gleam.
And now the tumults of the war,
Mingling confusedly from afar,
Swell in the wind. Now louder cries
Distinct of hounds and men arise.

Forth from the brake, with beating heart,
Th' assembled hares tumultuous start,
And, every straining nerve on wing,
Away precipitately spring.
The hunting band, a signal given,
Thick thundering o'er the plain are driven;
O'er cliff abrupt, and shrubby mound,
And river broad, impetuous bound;
Now plunge amid the forest shades,
Glance through the openings of the glades;
Now o'er the level valley sweep,
Now with short steps strain up the steep;
While backward from the hunter's eyes
The landscape like a torrent flies.
At last an ancient wood they gain'd,
By pruner's ax yet unprofan'd.
High o'er the rest, by Nature rear'd,
The oak's majestic boughs appear'd;
Beneath, a copse of various hue
In barbarous luxuriance grew.
No knife had curb'd the rambling sprays,
No hand had wove th' implicit maze.
The flowering thorn, self-taught to wind,
The hazle's stubborn stem intwin'd,
And bramble twigs were wreath'd around,
And rough furze crept along the ground.
Here sheltering, from the sons of murther,
The hares drag their tired limbs no further.

But lo, the western wind ere long
Was loud, and roar'd the woods among;
From rustling leaves, and crashing boughs
The sound of woe and war arose.
The hares distracted scour the grove,
As terrour and amazement drove;
But danger, wheresoe'er they fled,
Still seem'd impending o'er their head.
Now crowded in a grotto's gloom,
All hope extinct, they wait their doom.
Dire was the silence, till, at length,
Even from despair deriving strength,
With bloody eye and furious look,
A daring youth arose and spoke.
"O wretched race, the scorn of Fate,
Whom ills of every sort await!
O, curs'd with keenest sense to feel
The sharpest sting of every ill!
Say ye, who, fraught with mighty scheme,
Of liberty and vengeance dream,
What now remains? To what recess
Shall we our weary steps address,
Since Fate is evermore pursuing
All ways, and means to work our ruin?
Are we alone, of all beneath,
Condemn'd to misery worse than death?
Must we, with fruitless labour, strive
In misery worse than death to live?

No. Be the smaller ill our choice:
So dictates Nature's powerful voice.
Death's pang will in a moment cease;
And then, All hail, eternal peace!"
Thus while he spoke, his words impart
The dire resolve to every heart.
A distant lake in prospect lay,
That, glittering in the solar ray,
Gleam'd thro' the dusky trees, and shot
A trembling light along the grot.
Thither with one consent they bend,
Their sorrows with their lives to end,
While each, in thought, already hears
The water hissing in his ears.
Fast by the margin of the lake,
Conceal'd within a thorny brake,
A linnet sate, whose careless lay
Amus'd the solitary day.
Careless he sung, for on his breast
Sorrow no lasting trace impress'd;
When suddenly he heard a sound
Of swift feet traversing the ground.
Quick to the neighbouring tree he flies,
Thence trembling casts around his eyes;
No foe appear'd, his fears were vain;
Pleas'd he renews the sprightly strain.
The hares, whose noise had caused his fright,
Saw with surprise the linnet's flight.

" Is there on Earth a wretch," they said,
" Whom our approach can strike with dread?"
An instantaneous change of thought
To tumult every bosom wrought.
So fares the system-building sage,
Who, plodding on from youth to age,
At last on some foundation-dream
Has rear'd aloft his goodly scheme,
And prov'd his predecessors fools,
And bound all nature by his rules;
So fares he in that dreadful hour,
When injur'd Truth exerts her power,
Some new phenomenon to raise,
Which, bursting on his frighted gaze,
From its proud summit to the ground
Proves the whole edifice unsound.
" Children," thus spoke a hare sedate,
Who oft had known th' extremes of fate,
" In slight events the docile mind
May hints of good instruction find.
That our condition is the worst,
And we with such misfortunes curst
As all comparison defy,
Was late the universal cry;
When lo, an accident so slight
As yonder little linnet's flight,
Has made your stubborn heart confess
(So your amazement bids me guess)

That all our load of woes and fears
Is but a part of what he bears.
Where can he rest secure from harms,
Whom even a helpless hare alarms?
Yet he repines not at his lot,
When past, the danger is forgot:
On yonder bough he trims his wings,
And with unusual rapture sings:
While we, less wretched, sink beneath
Our lighter ills, and rush to death.
No more of this unmeaning rage,
But hear, my friends, the words of age.

"When by the winds of autumn driven
The scatter'd clouds fly cross the Heaven,
Oft have we, from some mountain's head,
Beheld th' alternate light and shade
Sweep the long vale. Here, hovering lowers,
The shadowy cloud; there downwards pours,
Streaming direct, a flood of day,
Which from the view flies swift away;
It flies, while other shades advance,
And other streaks of sunshine glance.
Thus chequer'd is the life below
With gleams of joy and clouds of woe.
Then hope not, while we journey on,
Still to be basking in the sun:
Nor fear, tho' now in shades ye mourn,
That sunshine will no more return.

If, by your terrours overcome,
Ye fly before th' approaching gloom,
The rapid clouds your flight pursue,
And darkness still o'ercasts your view.
Who longs to reach the radiant plain
Must onward urge his course amain;
For doubly swift the shadow flies,
When 'gainst the gale the pilgrim plies.
At least be firm, and undismay'd
Maintain your ground! the fleeting shade
Ere long spontaneous glides away,
And gives you back th' enlivening ray.
Lo, while I speak, our danger past!
No more the shrill horn's angry blast
Howls in our ear; the savage roar
Of war and murder is no more.
Then snatch the moment fate allows,
Nor think of past or future woes."
He spoke; and hope revives; the lake
That instant one and all forsake,
In sweet amusement to employ
The present sprightly hour of joy.
Now from the western mountain's brow,
Compass'd with clouds of various glow,
The Sun a broader orb displays,
And shoots aslope his ruddy rays.
The lawn assumes a fresher green,
And dew-drops spangle all the scene.

The balmy zephyr breathes along,
The shepherd sings his tender song,
With all their lays the groves resound,
And falling waters murmur round,
Discord and care were put to flight,
And all was peace, and calm delight.

EPITAPH:

BEING PART OF AN INSCRIPTION FOR A MONUMENT TO BE ERECTED BY A GENTLEMAN TO THE MEMORY OF HIS LADY.

FAREWEL, my best-belov'd; whose heavenly mind
Genius with virtue, strength with softness join'd;
Devotion, undebas'd by pride or art,
With meek simplicity, and joy of heart;
Though sprightly, gentle; though polite, sincere;
And only of thyself a judge severe;
Unblam'd, unequall'd in each sphere of life,
The tenderest daughter, sister, parent, wife.
In thee their patroness th' afflicted lost;
Thy friends, their pattern, ornament, and boast;

And I—but ah, can words my loss declare,
Or paint th' extremes of transport and despair!
O thou, beyond what verse or speech can tell,
My guide, my friend, my best-belov'd, farewel!

ODE

ON LORD H**'s BIRTH-DAY.

A MUSE, unskill'd in venal praise,
Unstain'd with flattery's art:
Who loves simplicity of lays
Breath'd ardent from the heart;
While gratitude and joy inspire,
Resumes the long-unpractis'd lyre,
To hail, O, H * *, thy natal morn:
No gaudy wreath of flowers she weaves,
But twines with oak the laurel leaves,
Thy cradle to adorn.

For not on beds of gaudy flowers
Thine ancestors reclin'd,
Where sloth dissolves, and spleen devours
All energy of mind.

To hurl the dart, to ride the car,
To stem the deluges of war,
And snatch from fate a sinking land;
Trample th' invader's lofty crest,
And from his grasp the dagger wrest,
And desolating brand:

'Twas this, that rais'd th' illustrious line
To match the first in fame!
A thousand years have seen it shine
With unabated flame.
Have seen thy mighty sires appear
Foremost in glory's high career,
The pride and pattern of the brave.
Yet, pure from lust of blood their fire,
And from ambition's wild desire,
They triumph'd but to save.

The Muse with joy attends their way
The vale of peace along;
There to its lord the village gay
Renews the grateful song.
Yon castle's glittering towers contain
No pit of woe, nor clanking chain,
Nor to the suppliant's wail resound;
The open doors the needy bless,
Th' unfriended hail their calm recess,
And gladness smiles around.

There to the sympathetic heart
Life's best delights belong,
To mitigate the mourner's smart,
To guard the weak from wrong.
Ye sons of luxury, be wise:
Know, happiness for ever flies
The cold and solitary breast;
Then let the social instinct glow,
And learn to feel another's woe,
And in his joy be blest.

O yet, ere Pleasure plant her snare
For unsuspecting youth;
Ere Flattery her song prepare
To check the voice of Truth;
O may his country's guardian power
Attend the slumbering infant's bower,
And bright, inspiring dreams impart;
To rouse th' hereditary fire,
To kindle each sublime desire,
Exalt, and warm the heart.

Swift to reward a parent's fears,
A parent's hopes to crown,
Roll on in peace, ye blooming years,
That rear him to renown;
When in his finish'd form and face
Admiring multitudes shall trace

Each patrimonial charm combin'd,
The courteous yet majestic mien,
The liberal smile, the look serene,
The great and gentle mind.

Yet, though thou draw a nation's eyes,
And win a nation's love,
Let not thy towering mind despise,
The village and the grove.
No slander there shall wound thy fame,
No ruffian take his deadly aim,
No rival weave the secret snare:
For Innocence with angel smile,
Simplicity that knows no guile,
And Love and Peace are there.

When winds the mountain oak assail,
And lay its glories waste,
Content may slumber in the vale,
Unconscious of the blast.
Thro' scenes of tumult while we roam,
The heart, alas! is ne'er at home,
It hopes in time to roam no more;
The mariner, not vainly brave,
Combats the storm, and rides the wave,
To rest at last on shore.

Ye proud, ye selfish, ye severe,
How vain your mask of state!

The good alone have joy sincere,
The good alone are great:
Great, when, amid the vale of peace,
They bid the plaint of sorrow cease,
And hear the voice of artless praise;
As when along the trophy'd plain
Sublime they lead the victor train,
While shouting nations gaze.

TO THE RIGHT HON.

LADY CHARLOTTE GORDON,

DRESSED IN A TARTAN SCOTCH BONNET, WITH PLUMES, &c.

WHY, lady, wilt thou bind thy lovely brow
With the dread semblance of that warlike helm,
That nodding plume, and wreath of various glow,
That grac'd the chiefs of Scotia's ancient realm?

Thou knowest that Virtue is of power the source,
And all her magic to thy eyes is given;
We own their empire, while we feel their force,
Beaming with the benignity of heaven.

The plumy helmet, and the martial mien,
Might dignify Minerva's awful charms;
But more resistless far th' Idalian queen—
Smiles, graces, gentleness, her only arms.

THE HERMIT.

At the close of the day, when the hamlet is still,
And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove,
When nought but the torrent is heard on the hill,
And nought but the nightingale's song in the grove:
'Twas thus, by the cave of the mountain afar,
While his harp rung symphonious, a hermit began;
No more with himself or with nature at war,
He thought as a sage, though he felt as a man.

"Ah! why, all abandon'd to darkness and woe,
Why, lone Philomela, that languishing fall?
For spring shall return, and a lover bestow,
And sorrow no longer thy bosom inthral,
But, if pity inspire thee, renew the sad lay,
Mourn, sweetest complainer, man calls thee to mourn;
O soothe him, whose pleasures like thine pass away:
Full quickly they pass—but they never return.

" Now gliding remote, on the verge of the sky,
The Moon half extinguish'd her crescent displays:
But lately I mark'd, when majestic on high
She shone, and the planets were lost in her blaze.
Roll on, thou fair orb, and with gladness pursue
The path that conducts thee to splendour again.
But man's faded glory what change shall renew!
Ah fool! to exult in a glory so vain!

" 'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more;
I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you;
For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,
Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glittering with dew,
Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn;
Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save.
But when shall spring visit the mouldering urn!
O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave!"

' 'Twas thus, by the glare of false science betray'd,
That leads, to bewilder; and dazzles, to blind:
My thoughts wont to roam, from shade onward to shade,
Destruction before me, and sorrow behind.
' O pity, great Father of light,' then I cry'd,
' Thy creature who fain would not wander from thee;
Lo, humbled in dust, I relinquish my pride:
From doubt and from darkness thou only canst free.'

"And darkness and doubt are now flying away,
No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn.
So breaks on the traveller, faint, and astray,
The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.
See Truth, Love, and Mercy, in triumph descending,
And nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom!
On the cold cheek of Death smiles and roses are blending,
And Beauty immortal awakes from the tomb."

ON THE REPORT OF A MONUMENT TO BE ERECTED IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY, TO THE MEMORY OF A LATE AUTHOR. (CHURCHILL).

(Written in 1765.)

[Part of a Letter to a person of quality.]

——Lest your lordship, who are so well acquainted with every thing that relates to true honour, should think hardly of me for attacking the memory of the dead, I beg leave to offer a few words in my own vindication.

If I had composed the following verses, with a view to gratify private resentment, to promote the interest of any faction, or to recommend myself to the patron-

age of any person whatsoever, I should have been altogether inexcusable. To attack the memory of the dead from selfish considerations, or from mere wantonness of malice, is an enormity which none can hold in greater detestation than I. But I composed them from very different motives; as every intelligent reader, who peruses them with attention, and who is willing to believe me upon my own testimony, will undoubtedly perceive. My motives proceeded from a sincere desire to do some small service to my country, and to the cause of truth and virtue. The promoters of faction I ever did, and ever will consider as the enemies of mankind: to the memory of such I owe no veneration: to the writings of such I owe no indulgence.

Your lordship knows that (Churchill) owed the greatest share of his renown to the most incompetent of all judges, the mob: actuated by the most unworthy of all principles, a spirit of insolence, and inflamed by the vilest of all human passions, hatred to their fellow citizens. Those who joined the cry in his favour seemed to me to be swayed rather by fashion than by real sentiment: he therefore might have lived and died unmolested by me, confident as I am, that posterity, when the present unhappy dissensions are forgotten, will do ample justice to his real character. But when I saw the extravagant honours that were paid to his memory, and heard that a monument in Westminster Abbey was intended for one whom even his admirers

acknowledge to have been an incendiary, and a debauchee; I could not help wishing that my countrymen would reflect a little on what they were doing, before they consecrated, by what posterity would think the public voice, a character, which no friend to virtue or true taste can approve. It was this sentiment, enforced by the earnest request of a friend, which produced the following little poem; in which I have said nothing of (Churchill's) manners that is not warranted by the best authority: nor of his writings, that is not perfectly agreeable to the opinion of many of the most competent judges in Britain.

(*Aberdeen*) *January*, 1765.

Bufo, begone! with thee may faction's fire,
That hatch'd thy salamander-fame, expire.
Fame, dirty idol of the brainless crowd,
What half-made moon-calf can mistake for good!
Since shared by knaves of high and low degree;
Cromwell and Cataline: Guido Faux, and thee.
By nature uninspir'd, untaught by art;
With not one thought that breathes the feeling heart,
With not one offering vow'd to Virtue's shrine,
With not one pure unprostituted line;
Alike debauch'd in body, soul, and lays;—
For pension'd censure, and for pension'd praise,

For ribaldry, for libels, lewdness, lies,
For blasphemy of all the good and wise:
Coarse violence in coarser doggrel writ,
Which bawling blackguards spell'd, and took for wit:
For conscience, honour, slighted, spurn'd, o'erthrown:
Lo, Bufo shines the minion of renown.

Is this the land that boasts a Milton's fire,
And magic Spenser's wildly warbling lyre!
The land that owns th' omnipotence of song,
When Shakespear whirls the throbbing heart along?
The land, where Pope, with energy divine,
In one strong blaze bade wit and fancy shine:
Whose verse, by truth in virtue's triumph born,
Gave knaves to infamy, and fools to scorn;
Yet pure in manners, and in thought refin'd,
Whose life and lays adorn'd and bless'd mankind?
Is this the land, where Gray's unlabour'd art
Sooths, melts, alarms, and ravishes the heart:
While the lone wanderer's sweet complainings flow
In simple majesty of manly woe:
Or while, sublime, on eagle-pinion driven,
He soars Pindaric heights, and sails the waste of Heaven?
Is this the land, o'er Shenstone's recent urn
Where all the Loves and gentler Graces mourn?
And where, to crown the hoary bard of night*
The Muses and the Virtues all unite?

* Dr. Young.

Is this the land, where Akenside displays
The bold yet temperate flame of ancient days?
Like the rapt sage,* in genius as in theme,
Whose hallow'd strain renown'd Ilyssus' stream:
Or him, the indignant bard,† whose patriot ire,
Sublime in vengeance, smote the dreadful lyre:
For truth, for liberty, for virtue warm,
Whose mighty song unnerv'd a tyrant's arm,
Hush'd the rude roar of discord, rage, and lust,
And spurn'd licentious demagogues to dust.

Is this the queen of realms! the glorious isle,
Britannia, blest in Heaven's indulgent smile!
Guardian of truth, and patroness of art,
Nurse of th' undaunted soul, and generous heart!
Where, from a base unthankful world exil'd,
Freedom exults to roam the careless wild:
Where taste to science every charm supplies,
And genius soars unbounded to the skies!

And shall a Bufo's most polluted name
Stain her bright tablet of untainted fame!
Shall his disgraceful name with theirs be join'd,
Who wish'd and wrought the welfare of their kind!
His name accurst, who leagued with ****** and Hell,
Labour'd to rouse, with rude and murderous yell,
Discord the fiend, to toss rebellion's brand,
To whelm in rage and woe a guiltless land:

* Plato.

† Alceus. See Akenside's Ode on Lyric Poetry.

To frustrate wisdom's, virtue's noblest plan,
And triumph in the miseries of man.
Driveling and dull, when crawls the reptile Muse
Swoln from the sty, and rankling from the stews,
With envy, spleen, and pestilence replete,
And gorg'd with dust she lick'd from Treason's feet:
Who once, like Satan, rais'd to Heaven her sight,
But turn'd abhorrent from the hated light:—
O'er such a Muse shall wreaths of glory bloom!
No—shame and execration be her doom.
Hard-fated Bufo, could not dulness save
Thy soul from sin, from infamy thy grave!
Blackmore and Quarles, those blockheads of renown,
Lavish'd their ink, but never harm'd the town.
Though this, thy brother in discordant song,
Harass'd the ear, and cramp'd the labouring tongue:
And that, like thee, taught staggering prose to stand,
And limp on stilts of rhyme around the land.
Harmless they doz'd a scribbling life away,
And yawning nations own'd th' innoxious lay,
But from thy graceless, rude, and beastly brain
What fury breath'd th' incendiary strain?
Did hate to vice exasperate thy style?
No—Bufo match'd the vilest of the vile.
Yet blazon'd was his verse with Virtue's name—
Thus prudes look down to hide their want of shame:
Thus hypocrites to truth, and fools to sense,
And fops to taste, have sometimes made pretence:

Thus thieves and gamesters swear by honour's laws:
Thus pension-hunters bawl "their country's cause:"
Thus furious Teague for moderation rav'd
And own'd his soul to liberty enslav'd.

Nor yet, though thousand cits admire thy rage,
Though less of fool than felon marks thy page:
Nor yet, though here and there one lonely spark
Of wit half brightens through th' involving dark,
To show the gloom more hideous for the foil,
But not repay the drudging reader's toil;
(For who for one poor pearl of clouded ray
Through Alpine dunghills delves his desperate way?)
Did genius to thy verse such bane impart?
No. 'Twas the demon of thy venom'd heart,
(Thy heart with rancour's quintessence endued)
And the blind zeal of a misjudging crowd.

Thus from rank soil a poison'd mushroom sprung,
Nurseling obscene of mildew and of dung:
By Heaven design'd on its own native spot
Harmless t' enlarge its bloated bulk, and rot.
But gluttony th' abortive nuisance saw;
It rous'd his ravenous undiscerning maw:
Gulp'd down the tasteless throat, the mess abhorr'd
Shot fiery influence round the maddening board.

O had thy verse been impotent as dull,
Nor spoke the rancorous heart, but lumpish scull;
Had mobs distinguish'd, they who howl'd thy fame,
The icicle from the pure diamond's flame,

From fancy's soul thy gross imbruted sense,
From dauntless truth thy shameless insolence,
From elegance confusion's monstrous mass,
And from the lion's spoils the sculking ass,
From rapture's strain the drawling doggrel line,
From warbling seraphim the gruntling swine;—
With gluttons, dunces, rakes, thy name had slept,
Nor o'er her sullied fame Britannia wept:
Nor had the Muse with honest zeal possess'd,
T' avenge her country, by thy name disgrac'd,
Rais'd this bold strain for virtue, truth, mankind,
And thy fell shade to infamy resign'd.

When frailty leads astray the soul sincere,
Let mercy shed the soft and manly tear.
When to the grave descends the sensual sot,
Unnamed, unnoticed, let his carrion rot.
When paltry rogues, by stealth, deceit, or force,
Hazard their necks, ambitious of your purse:
For such the hangman wreaths his trusty gin,
And let the gallows expiate their sin.
But when a ruffian, whose portentous crimes
Like plagues and earthquakes terrify the times,
Triumphs through life, from legal judgment free,
For Hell may hatch what law could ne'er foresee:
Sacred from vengeance shall his memory rest?—
Judas though dead, though damn'd, we still detest.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

[*Published in* 1765.]

FAR in the depth of Ida's inmost grove,
A scene for love and solitude design'd;
Where flowery woodbines wild by Nature wove
Form'd the lone bower, the royal swain reclin'd.

All up the craggy cliffs, that tower'd to Heaven,
Green wav'd the murmuring pines on every side;
Save where, fair opening to the beam of even,
A dale slop'd gradual to the valley wide.

Echoed the vale with many a cheerful note;
The lowing of the herds resounding long,
The shrilling pipe, and mellow horn remote,
And social clamours of the festive throng.

For now, low hovering o'er the western main,
Where amber clouds begirt his dazzling throne,
The Sun, with ruddier verdure deckt the plain:
And lakes, and streams, and spires triumphal shone.

And many a band of ardent youths were seen;
Some into rapture fir'd by glory's charms,
Or hurl'd the thundering car along the green,
Or march'd embattled on in glittering arms.

Others more mild, in happy leisure gay,
The darkening forest's lonely gloom explore,
Or by Scamander's flowery margin stray,
Or the blue Hellespont's resounding shore.

But chief the eye to Ilion's glories turn'd,
That gleam'd along th' extended champaign far,
And bulwarks, in terrific pomp adorn'd,
Where Peace sat smiling at the frowns of War.

Rich in the spoils of many a subject-clime,
In pride luxurious blaz'd th' imperial dome;
Tower'd mid th' encircling grove the fane sublime;
And dread memorials mark'd the hero's tomb.

Who from the black and bloody cavern led
The savage stern, and sooth'd his boisterous breast;
Who spoke, and Science rear'd her radiant head,
And brighten'd o'er the long benighted waste;

Or, greatly daring in his country's cause,
Whose heaven-taught soul the aweful plan design'd,
Whence Power stood trembling at the voice of laws;
Whence soar'd on Freedom's wing th' ethereal mind.

But not the pomp that royalty displays,
Nor all th' imperial pride of lofty Troy,
Nor Virtue's triumph of immortal praise
Could rouse the languor of the lingering boy.

Abandon'd all to soft Enone's charms,
He to oblivion doom'd the listless day;
Inglorious lull'd in Love's dissolving arms,
While flutes lascivious breath'd th' enfeebling lay.

To trim the ringlets of his scented hair:
To aim, insidious, Love's bewitching glance;
Or cull fresh garlands for the gaudy fair,
Or wanton loose in the voluptuous dance:

These were his arts; these won Enone's love,
Nor sought his fettered soul a nobler aim.
Ah why should beauty's smile those arts approve,
Which taint with infamy the lover's flame!

Now laid at large beside a murmuring spring,
Melting he listen'd to the vernal song,
And Echo listening wav'd her airy wing,
While the deep winding dales the lays prolong.

When slowly floating down the azure skies
A crimson cloud flash'd on his startled sight;
Whose skirts gay-sparkling with unnumber'd dies
Lanched the long billowy trails of flickery light.

That instant, hush'd was all the vocal grove,
Hush'd was the gale, and every ruder sound,
And strains aërial, warbling far above,
Rung in the ear a magic peal profound.

Near, and more near, the swimming radiance roll'd;
Along the mountains stream the lingering fires,
Sublime the groves of Ida blaze with gold,
And all the Heaven resounds with louder lyres.

The trumpet breathed a note: and all in air,
The glories vanish'd from the dazzled eye;
And three ethereal forms, divinely fair,
Down the steep glade were seen advancing nigh.

The flowering glade fell level where they mov'd;
O'er-arching high the clustering roses hung,
And gales from Heaven on balmy pinion rov'd,
And hill and dale with gratulation rung.

The FIRST with slow and stately step drew near,
Fix'd was her lofty eye, erect her mien:
Sublime in grace, in majesty severe,
She look'd and mov'd a goddess and a queen.

Her robe along the gale profusely stream'd,
Light lean'd the sceptre on her bending arm;
And round her brow a starry circlet gleam'd,
Heightening the pride of each commanding charm.

Milder the NEXT came on with artless grace,
And on a javelin's quivering length reclin'd:
T' exalt her mien she bade no splendour blaze,
Nor pomp of vesture fluctuate on the wind.

Serene, though awful, on her brow the light
Of heavenly wisdom shone: nor rov'd her eyes,
Save to the shadowy cliff's majestic height,
Or the blue concave of th' involving skies.

Keen were her eyes to search the inmost soul:
Yet Virtue triumph'd in their beams benign,
And impious Pride oft felt their dread controul,
When in fierce lightning flash'd the wrath divine.*

With awe and wonder gaz'd th' adoring swain;
His kindling cheeks great Virtue's power confess'd;
But soon 'twas o'er, for Virtue prompts in vain,
When Pleasure's influence numbs the nerveless breast.

And now advanced the QUEEN OF MELTING JOY,
Smiling supreme in unresisted charms,
Ah then, what transports fir'd the trembling boy!
How throb'd his sickening frame with fierce alarms!

* This is agreeable to the theology of Homer, who often represents Pallas as the executioner of divine vengeance.

Her eyes in liquid light luxurious swim,
And languish with unutterable love.
Heaven's warm bloom glows along each bright'ning limb,
Where fluttering bland the veil's thin mantlings rove.

Quick, blushing as abash'd, she half withdrew:
One hand a bough of flowering myrtle wav'd,
One graceful spread, where, scarce conceal'd from view,
Soft through the parting robe her bosom heav'd.

"Offspring of Jove supreme! belov'd of Heav'n!
Attend." Thus spoke the empress of the skies.
"For know, to thee, high-fated prince, 'tis given
Through the bright realms of Fame sublime to rise,

"Beyond man's boldest hope; if nor the wiles
Of Pallas triumph o'er th' ennobling thought;
Nor Pleasure lure with artificial smiles
To quaff the poison of her luscious draught.

"When Juno's charms the prize of beauty claim
Shall ought on Earth, shall ought in Heav'n contend?
Whom Juno calls to high triumphant fame,
Shall he to meaner sway inglorious bend?

"Yet lingering comfortless in lonesome wild,
Where Echo sleeps mid cavern'd vales profound,
The pride of Troy, Dominion's darling child,
Pines while the slow hour stalks its sullen round.

"Hear thou, of Heav'n unconscious! From the blaze
Of glory, stream'd from Jove's eternal throne,
Thy soul, O mortal, caught th' inspiring rays
That to a god exalt Earth's raptur'd son.

"Hence the bold wish, on boundless pinion born,
That fires, alarms, impels the maddening soul;
The hero's eye, hence, kindling into scorn,
Blasts the proud menace, and defies controul.

"But, unimprov'd, Heav'n's noblest boons are vain,
No sun with plenty crowns th' uncultur'd vale:
Where green lakes languish on the silent plain,
Death rides the billows of the western gale.

"Deep in yon mountain's womb, where the dark cave
Howls to the torrent's everlasting roar,
Does the rich gem its flashy radiance wave?
Or flames with steady ray th' imperial ore?

"Toil deck'd with glittering domes yon champaign wide,
And wakes yon grove-embosom'd lawns to joy,
And rends the rough-ore from the mountain's side,
Spangling with starry pomp the thrones of Troy.

"Fly these soft scenes. Even now, with playful art,
Love wreathes the flowery ways with fatal snare.
And nurse th' ethereal fire that warms thy heart,
That fire ethereal lives but by thy care.

"Lo, hovering near on dark and dampy wing,
Sloth with stern patience waits the hour assign'd,
From her chill plume the deadly dews to fling,
That quench Heav'n's beam, and freeze the cheerless mind.

"Vain, then, th' enlivening sound of Fame's alarms,
For Hope's exulting impulse prompts no more:
Vain even the joys that lure to Pleasure's arms,
The throb of transport is for ever o'er.

"O who shall then to Fancy's darkening eyes
Recal th' Elysian dreams of joy and light?
Dim through the gloom the formless visions rise,
Snatch'd instantaneous down the gulph of night.

"Thou, who securely lull'd in youth's warm ray
Mark'st not the desolations wrought by Time,
Be rous'd or perish. Ardent for its prey
Speeds the fell hour that ravages thy prime.

"And, midst the horrours shrin'd of midnight storm,
The fiend Oblivion eyes thee from afar,
Black with intolerable frowns her form,
Beckoning th' embattled whirlwinds into war.

"Fanes, bulwarks, mountains, worlds, their tempest whelms:
Yet glory braves unmov'd th' impetuous sweep.
Fly then, ere, hurl'd from life's delightful realms,
Thou sink t' Oblivion's dark and boundless deep.

"Fly then, where Glory points the path sublime,
See her crown dazzling with eternal light!
'Tis Juno prompts thy daring steps to climb,
And girds thy bounding heart with matchless might.

"Warm in the raptures of divine desire,
Burst the soft chain that curbs th' aspiring mind:
And fly, where Victory, born on wings of fire,
Waves her red banner to the rattling wind.

"Ascend the car. Indulge the pride of arms,
Where clarions roll their kindling strains on high,
Where the eye maddens to the dread alarms,
And the long shout tumultuous rends the sky.

"Plung'd in the uproar of the thundering field
I see thy lofty arm the tempest guide:
Fate scatters lightning from thy meteor-shield,
And Ruin spreads around the sanguine tide.

"Go, urge the terrours of thy headlong car
On prostrate Pride, and Grandeur's spoils o'erthrown,
While all amaz'd even heroes shrink afar,
And hosts embattled vanish at thy frown.

"When glory crowns thy godlike toils, and all
The triumph's lengthening pomp exalts thy soul,
When lowly at thy feet the mighty fall,
And tyrant's tremble at thy stern controul:

"When conquering millions hail thy sovereign might,
And tribes unknown dread acclamation join:
How wilt thou spurn the forms of low delight!
For all the ecstasies of Heav'n are thine:

"For thine the joys, that fear no length of days,
Whose wide effulgence scorns all mortal bound:
Fame's trump in thunder shall announce thy praise,
Nor bursting worlds her clarion's blast confound."

The goddess ceas'd, not dubious of the prize:
Elate she mark'd his wild and rolling eye,
Mark'd his lip quiver, and his bosom rise,
And his warm cheek suffus'd with crimson die.

But Pallas now drew near. Sublime, serene
In conscious dignity, she viewed the swain:
Then, love and pity softening all her mien,
Thus breathed with accents mild the solemn strain.

"Let those, whose arts to fatal paths betray,
The soul with passion's gloom tempestuous blind,
And snatch from Reason's ken th' auspicious ray
Truth darts from Heaven to guide th' exploring mind.

"But Wisdom loves the calm and serious hour,
When Heaven's pure emanation beams confess'd:
Rage, ecstasy, alike disclaim her power,
She wooes each gentler impulse of the breast.

"Sincere th' unalter'd bliss her charms impart,
Sedate th' enlivening ardours they inspire:
She bids no transient rapture thrill the heart,
She wakes no feverish gust of fierce desire.

"Unwise, who, tossing on the watery way,
All to the storm th' unfetter'd sail devolve:
Man more unwise resigns the mental sway,
Born headlong on by passion's keen resolve.

"While storms remote but murmur on thine ear,
Nor waves in ruinous uproar round thee roll,
Yet, yet a moment check thy prone career,
And curb the keen resolve that prompts thy soul.

"Explore thy heart, that, rous'd by Glory's name,
Pants all enraptur'd with the mighty charm—
And, does Ambition quench each milder flame?
And is it conquest that alone can warm?

"T' indulge fell Rapine's desolating lust,
To drench the balmy lawn in streaming gore,
To spurn the hero's cold and silent dust—
Are these thy joys? Nor throbs thy heart for more?

" Pleas'd canst thou listen to the patriot's groan,
And the wild wail of Innocence forlorn?
And hear th' abandon'd maid's last frantic moan,
Her love for ever from her bosom torn?

" Nor wilt thou shrink, when Virtue's fainting breath
Pours the dread curse of vengeance on thy head?
Nor when the pale ghost bursts the cave of death,
To glare distraction on thy midnight bed?

" Was it for this, though born to regal power,
Kind Heav'n to thee did nobler gifts consign,
Bade Fancy's influence gild thy natal hour,
And bade Philanthropy's applause be thine?

" Theirs be the dreadful glory to destroy,
And theirs the pride of pomp, and praise suborn'd,
Whose eye ne'er lighten'd at the smile of Joy,
Whose cheek the tear of Pity ne'er adorn'd:

" Whose soul, each finer sense instinctive quell'd,
The lyre's mellifluous ravishment defies:
Nor marks where Beauty roves the flowery field,
Or Grandeur's pinion sweeps th' unbounded skies.

" Hail to sweet Fancy's unexpressive charm!
Hail to the pure delights of social love!
Hail, pleasures mild, that fire not while ye warm,
Nor rack th' exulting frame, but gently move.

"But Fancy soothes no more, if stern Remorse
With iron grasp the tortur'd bosom wring.
Ah then, even Fancy speeds the venom's course,
Even Fancy points with rage the maddening sting.

"Her wrath a thousand gnashing fiends attend,
And roll the snakes, and toss the brands of Hell:
The beam of Beauty blasts: dark Heavens impend
Tottering: and Music thrills with startling yell.

"What then avails, that with exhaustless store
Obsequious Luxury loads thy glittering shrine:
What then avails, that prostrate slaves adore,
And Fame proclaims thee matchless and divine?

"What tho' bland flattery all her arts apply?—
Will these avail to calm th' infuriate brain?
Or will the roaring surge, when heav'd on high,
Headlong hang, hush'd, to hear the piping swain?

"In health how fair, how ghastly in decay
Man's lofty form! how heavenly fair the mind
Sublimed by Virtue's sweet enlivening sway!
But ah! to guilt's outrageous rule resign'd,

"How hideous and forlorn! when ruthless Care
With cankering tooth corrodes the seeds of life,
And deaf with passion's storms when pines Despair,
And howling furies rouse th' eternal strife.

"O, by thy hopes of joy that restless glow,
Pledges of Heaven! be taught by Wisdom's lore:
With anxious haste each doubtful path forego,
And life's wild ways with cautious fear explore.

"Straight be thy course: nor tempt the maze that leads
Where fell Remorse his shapeless strength conceals,
And oft Ambition's dizzy cliff he treads,
And slumbers oft in Pleasure's flow'ry vales.

"Nor linger unresolv'd: Heav'n prompts the choice;
Save when Presumption shuts the ear of Pride:
With grateful awe attend to Nature's voice,
The voice of Nature Heav'n ordain'd thy guide.

"Warn'd by her voice, the arduous path pursue,
That leads to Virtue's fane a hardy band,
What, though no gaudy scenes decoy their view,
Nor clouds of fragrance roll along the land?

"What, though rude mountains heave the flinty way,
Yet there the soul drinks light and life divine,
And pure aëreal gales of gladness play,
Brace every nerve, and every sense refine.

"Go, prince, be virtuous, and be blest. The throne
Rears not its state to swell the couch of Lust:
Nor dignify Corruption's daring son,
T' o'erwhelm his humbler brethren of the dust.

"But yield an ampler scene to Bounty's eye,
An ampler range to Mercy's ear expand:
And, midst admiring nations, set on high
Virtue's fair model, framed by Wisdom's hand.

"Go then: the moan of Woe demands thine aid:
Pride's licens'd outrage claims thy slumbering ire:
Pale Genius roams the bleak neglected shade,
And battening Avarice mocks his tuneless lyre.

"Even Nature pines by vilest chains oppress'd:
Th' astonish'd kingdoms crouch to Fashion's nod.
O ye pure inmates of the gentle breast,
Truth, Freedom, Love, O where is your abode?

"O yet once more shall Peace from Heaven return,
And young Simplicity with mortals dwell!
Nor Innocence th' august pavilion scorn,
Nor meek Contentment fly the humble cell!

"Wilt thou, my prince, the beauteous train implore,
Midst Earth's forsaken scenes once more to bide?
Then shall the shepherd sing in every bower,
And Love with garlands wreath the domes of Pride.

"The bright tear starting in th' impassion'd eyes
Of silent gratitude; the smiling gaze
Of gratulation, faltering while he tries
With voice of transport to proclaim thy praise;

"Th' ethereal glow that stimulates thy frame,
When all th' according powers harmonious move,
And wake to energy each social aim,
Attuned spontaneous to the will of Jove;

"Be these, O man, the triumphs of thy soul;
And all the conqueror's dazzling glories slight,
That meteor-like, o'er trembling nations roll,
To sink at once in deep and dreadful night.

"Like thine, yon orb's stupendous glories burn
With genial beam; nor, at th' approach of even,
In shades of horrour leave the world to mourn,
But gild with lingering light th' impurpled Heav'n."

Thus while she spoke, her eye, sedately meek,
Look'd the pure fervour of maternal love.
No rival zeal intemperate flush'd her cheek—
Can Beauty's boast the soul of Wisdom move?

Worth's noble pride, can Envy's leer appal,
Or staring Folly's vain applauses soothe?
Can jealous Fear Truth's dauntless heart enthral?
Suspicion lurks not in the heart of Truth.

And now the shepherd raised his pensive head:
Yet unresolved and fearful roved his eyes,
Scared at the glances of the awful maid;
For young unpractis'd Guilt distrusts the guise

Of shameless Arrogance—His wav'ring breast,
Though warm'd by Wisdom, own'd no constant fire;
While lawless Fancy roam'd afar, unblest
Save in the oblivious lap of soft Desire.

When thus the queen of soul-dissolving smiles:
"Let gentler fate my darling prince attend,
Joyless and cruel are the warrior's spoils,
Dreary the path stern Virtue's sons ascend.

"Of human joy full short is the career,
And the dread verge still gains upon your sight:
While idly gazing, far beyond your sphere,
Ye scan the dream of unapproach'd delight:

"Till every sprightly hour, and blooming scene,
Of life's gay morn unheeded glides away,
And clouds of tempests mount the blue serene,
And storms and ruin close the troublous day.

"Then still exult to hail the present joy,
Thine be the boon that comes unearn'd by toil;
No froward vain desire thy bliss annoy,
No flattering hope thy longing hours beguile.

"Ah! why should man pursue the charms of Fame,
For ever luring, yet for ever coy?
Light as the gaudy rainbow's pillar'd gleam,
That melts illusive from the wondering boy!

"What though her throne irradiate many a clime,
If hung loose-tottering o'er th' unfathom'd tomb?
What though her mighty clarion, rear'd sublime,
Display the imperial wreathe, and glittering plume?

"Can glittering plume, or can th' imperial wreathe
Redeem from unrelenting fate the brave?
What note of triumph can her clarion breathe,
T' alarm th' eternal midnight of the grave?

"That night draws on: nor will the vacant hour
Of expectation linger as it flies:
Nor Fate one moment unenjoy'd restore:
Each moment's flight how precious to the wise!

"O shun th' annoyance of the bustling throng,
That haunt with zealous turbulence the great,
There coward Office boasts th' unpunished wrong,
And sneaks secure in insolence of state.

"O'er fancy'd injury Suspicion pines,
And in grim silence gnaws the festering wound;
Deceit the rage-embitter'd smile refines,
And Censure spreads the viperous hiss around.

"Hope not, fond prince, though Wisdom guard thy throne,
Tho' Truth and Bounty prompt each generous aim,
Tho' thine the palm of peace, the victor's crown,
The Muse's rapture, and the patriot's flame:

"Hope not, tho' all that captivates the wise,
All that endears the good exalt thy praise:
Hope not to taste repose: for Envy's eyes
At fairest worth still point their deadly rays.

"Envy, stern tyrant of the flinty heart,
Can aught of Virtue, Truth, or Beauty charm?
Can soft Compassion thrill with pleasing smart,
Repentance melt, or Gratitude disarm.

"Ah no. Where Winter Scythia's waste enchains,
And monstrous shapes roar to the ruthless storm,
Not Phœbus' smile can cheer the dreadful plains,
Or soil accurs'd with balmy life inform.

"Then, Envy, then is thy triumphant hour,
When mourns Benevolence his baffled scheme:
When Insult mocks the clemency of Pow'r,
And loud Dissension's livid firebrands gleam:

"When squint-ey'd Slander plies th' unhallow'd tongue,
From poison'd maw when Treason weaves his line,
And Muse apostate (infamy to song!)
Grovels, low-muttering, at Sedition's shrine.

"Let not my prince forego the peaceful shade,
The whispering grove, the fountain and the plain,
Power, with th' oppressive weight of pomp array'd,
Pants for simplicity and ease in vain.

"The yell of frantic Mirth may stun his ear,
But frantic Mirth soon leaves the heart forlorn:
And Pleasure flies that high tempestuous sphere,
Far different scenes her lucid paths adorn.

"She loves to wander on th' untrodden lawn,
Or the green bosom of reclining hill,
Sooth'd by the careless warbler of the dawn,
Or the lone plaint of ever murmuring rill.

"Or from the mountain-glades aëreal brow,
While to her song a thousand echoes call,
Marks the wild woodland wave remote below,
Where shepherds pipe unseen, and waters fall.

"Her influence oft the festive hamlet proves,
Where the high carol cheers th' exulting ring;
And oft she roams the maze of wildering groves,
Listening th' unnumber'd melodies of Spring.

"Or to the long and lonely shore retires;
What time, loose-glimmering to the lunar beam,
Faint heaves the slumberous wave, and starry fires
Gild the blue deep with many a lengthening gleam.

"Then to the balmy bower of Rapture born,
While strings self-warbling breathe elysian rest,
Melts in delicious vision, till the morn
Spangle with twinkling dew the flowery waste.

"The frolic Moments, purple-pinion'd, dance
Around, and scatter roses as they play:
And the blithe Graces, hand in hand, advance,
Where, with her lov'd compeers, she deigns to stray.

"Mild Solitude, in veil of rustic die,
Her sylvan spear with moss-grown ivy bound:
And Indolence, with sweetly-languid eye,
And zoneless robe that trails along the ground.

"But chiefly love—O thou, whose gentle mind,
Each soft indulgence Nature fram'd to share,
Pomp, wealth, renown, dominion, all resign'd,
O haste to Pleasure's bower, for Love is there.

"Love, the desire of gods! the feast of Heaven!
Yet to Earth's favour'd offspring not denied!
Ah, let not thankless man the blessing given
Enslave to Fame, or sacrifice to Pride.

"Nor I from Virtue's call decoy thine ear;
Friendly to Pleasure are her sacred laws,
Let Temperance' smile the cup of gladness cheer,
That cup is death, if he with-hold applause.

"Far from thy haunt be Envy's baneful sway,
And Hate, that works the harass'd soul to storm,
But woo Content to breathe her soothing lay,
And charm from Fancy's view each angry form.

"No savage joy th' harmonious hours profane!
Whom Love refines, can barbarous tumults please?
Shall rage of blood pollute the sylvan reign?
Shall Leisure wanton in the spoils of Peace?

"Free let the feathery race indulge the song,
Inhale the liberal beam, and melt in love:
Free let the fleet hind bound her hills along,
And in pure streams the watery nations rove.

"To joy in Nature's universal smile
Well suits, O man, thy pleasurable sphere;
But why should Virtue doom thy years to toil?
Ah, why should Virtue's law be deem'd severe?

"What meed, Beneficence, thy care repays?
What, Sympathy, thy still returning pang?
And why his generous arm should Justice raise,
To dare the vengeance of a tyrant's fang!

"From thankless spite no bounty can secure;
Or froward wish of discontent fulfil,
That knows not to regret thy bounded power,
But blames with keen reproach thy partial will.

"To check th' impetuous all-involving tide
Of human woes, how impotent thy strife!
High o'er thy mounds devouring surges ride,
Nor reek thy baffled toils, or lavish'd life,

"The bower of bliss, the smile of love be thine,
Unlabour'd ease, and leisure's careless dream.
Such be their joys, who bend at VENUS' shrine,
And own her charms beyond compare supreme."

Warm'd as she spoke, all panting with delight,
Her kindling beauties breathed triumphant bloom;
And Cupids flutter'd round in circlets bright,
And Flora pour'd from all her stores perfume.

"Thine be the prize," exclaim'd th' enraptur'd youth,
"Queen of unrivall'd charms, and matchless joy."—
O blind to fate, felicity and truth!—
But such are they, whom Pleasure's snares decoy.

The Sun was sunk; the vision was no more;
Night downward rush'd tempestuous, at the frown
Of Jove's awaken'd wrath: deep thunders roar,
And forests howl afar and mountains groan.

And sanguine meteors glare athwart the plain;
With horrour's scream the Ilian towers resound,
Raves the hoarse storm along the bellowing main,
And the strong earthquake rends the shuddering ground.

THE WOLF AND SHEPHERDS,

A FABLE.

[*Written in* 1757, *and first published in* 1766.]

Laws, as we read in ancient sages,
Have been like cobwebs in all ages.
Cobwebs for little flies are spread,
And laws for little folks are made;
But if an insect of renown,
Hornet or beetle, wasp or drone,
Be caught in quest of sport or plunder,
The flimsy fetter flies in sunder.
Your simile perhaps may please one,
With whom wit holds the place of reason:
But can you prove that this in fact is
Agreeable to life and practice?
Then hear, what in his simple way
Old Esop told me t'other day.
In days of yore, but (which is very odd)
Our author mentions not the period.
We mortal men less given to speeches,
Allow'd the beasts sometimes to teach us.

But now we all are prattlers grown,
And suffer no voice but our own;
With us no beast has leave to speak,
Although his honest heart should break.
'Tis true, your asses and your apes,
And other brutes in human shapes,
And that thing made of sound and show
Which mortals have misnamed a beau,
(But in the language of the sky
Is call'd a two-legg'd butterfly)
Will make your very heartstrings ake
With loud and everlasting clack,
And beat your auditory drum,
Till you grow deaf, or they grow dumb.
But to our story we return:
'Twas early on a Summer morn,
A Wolf forsook the mountain-den,
And issued hungry on the plain.
Full many a stream and lawn he pass'd,
And reach'd a winding vale at last;
Where from a hollow rock he spy'd
The shepherds drest in flowery pride.
Garlands were strow'd, and all was gay,
To celebrate an holiday.
The merry tabor's gamesome sound
Provok'd the sprightly dance around.
Hard by a rural board was rear'd,
On which in fair array appear'd

The peach, the apple, and the raisin,
And all the fruitage of the season.
But, more distinguish'd than the rest,
Was seen a weather ready drest,
That smoking, recent from the flame,
Diffus'd a stomach-rousing steam.
Our wolf could not endure the sight,
Courageous grew his appetite:
His entrails groan'd with tenfold pain,
He lick'd his lips and lick'd again;
At last, with lightning in his eyes,
He bounces forth, and fiercely cries,
"Shepherds, I am not given to scolding,
But now my spleen I cannot hold in.
By Jove, such scandalous oppression
Would put an elephant in passion.
You, who your flocks (as you pretend)
By wholesome laws from harm defend,
Which make it death for any beast,
How much soe'er by hunger press'd,
To seize a sheep by force or stealth,
For sheep have right to life and health;
Can you commit, uncheck'd by shame,
What in a beast so much you blame?
What is a law, if those who make it
Become the forwardest to break it?
The case is plain: you would reserve
All to yourselves, while others starve.

Such laws from base self-interest spring,
Not from the reason of the thing—"
He was proceeding, when a swain
Burst out.—"And dares a wolf arraign
His betters, and condemn their measures,
And contradict their wills and pleasures?
We have establish'd laws, 'tis true,
But laws are made for such as you.
Know, sirrah, in its very nature
A law can't reach the legislature.
For laws, without a sanction join'd,
As all men know, can never bind:
But sanctions reach not us the makers,
For who dares punish us though breakers?
'Tis therefore plain, beyond denial,
That laws were ne'er design'd to tie all.
But those, whom sanctions reach alone;
We stand accountable to none.
Besides, 'tis evident, that, seeing
Laws from the great derive their being.
They as in duty bound should love
The great, in whom they live and move,
And humbly yield to their desires:
'Tis just, what gratitude requires.
What suckling dandled on the lap
Would tear away its mother's pap?
But hold—Why deign I to dispute
With such a scoundrel of a brute?

Logick is lost upon a knave,
Let action prove the law our slave."
An angry nod his will declar'd
To his gruff yeomen of the guard,
The full-fed mongrels, train'd to ravage,
Fly to devour the shaggy savage.
The beast had now no time to lose
In chopping logick with his foes,
"This argument," quoth he, "has force,
And swiftness is my sole resource."
He said, and left the swains their prey,
And to the mountains scower'd away.

TRANSLATIONS.

ANACREON. Ode XXII.

Παρὰ τὴν σκίην, βάθυλλε,
Κάθισον· ———

Bathyllus, in yonder lone grove
All carelessly let us recline:
To shade us the branches above
Their leaf-waving tendrils combine;
While a streamlet inviting repose
Soft-murmuring wanders away,
And gales warble wild through the boughs:
Who there would not pass the sweet day?

THE BEGINNING OF THE

FIRST BOOK OF LUCRETIUS.

Æneadum Genetrix ——— v. 1—45.

Mother of mighty Rome's imperial line,
Delight of man, and of the powers divine,
Venus, all-bounteous queen! whose genial pow'r
Diffuses beauty in unbounded store
Through seas, and fertile plains, and all that lies
Beneath the starr'd expansion of the skies.
Prepar'd by thee, the embryo springs to day,
And opes its eye-lids on the golden ray.
At thy approach, the clouds tumultuous fly,
And the hush'd storms in gentle breezes die;
Flowers instantaneous spring; the billows sleep;
A wavy radiance smiles along the deep;
At thy approach, th' untroubled sky refines,
And all serene Heav'n's lofty concave shines.
Soon as her blooming form the Spring reveals,
And Zephyr breathes his warm prolific gales,
The feather'd tribes first catch the genial flame,
And to the groves thy glad return proclaim.

Thence to the beasts the soft infection spreads;
The raging cattle spurn the grassy meads,
Burst o'er the plains, and frantic in their course
Cleave the wild torrents with resistless force.
Won by thy charms thy dictates all obey,
And eager follow where thou lead'st the way.
Whatever haunts the mountains, or the main,
The rapid river, or the verdant plain,
Or forms its leafy mansion in the shades,
All, all thy universal power pervades,
Each panting bosom melts to soft desires,
And with the love of propagation fires.
And since thy sovereign influence guides the reins,
Of nature, and the universe sustains;
Since nought without thee bursts the bonds of night,
To hail the happy realms of heavenly light;
Since love, and joy, and harmony are thine,
Guide me, O goddess, by thy power divine,
And to my rising lays thy succour bring,
While I the universe attempt to sing.
O, may my verse deserv'd applause obtain
Of him, for whom I try the daring strain,
My Mimmius, him, whom thou profusely kind
Adorn'st with every excellence refin'd.
And that immortal charms my song may grace,
Let war, with all its cruel labours, cease;
O hush the dismal din of arms once more,
And calm the jarring world from shore to shore.

By thee alone the race of man foregoes
The rage of blood, and sinks in soft repose:
For mighty Mars, the dreadful god of arms,
Who wakes or stills the battle's dire alarms,
In love's strong fetters by thy charms is bound,
And languishes with an eternal wound.
Oft from his bloody toil the god retires
To quench in thy embrace his fierce desires.
Soft on thy heaving bosom he reclines,
And round thy yielding neck transported twines;
There fix'd in ecstasy intense surveys
Thy kindling beauties with insatiate gaze,
Grows to thy balmy mouth, and ardent sips
Celestial sweets from thy ambrosial lips.
O, while the god with fiercest raptures blest
Lies all dissolving on thy sacred breast,
O breathe thy melting whispers to his ear,
And bid him still the loud alarms of war.
In these tumultuous days, the Muse, in vain,
Her steady tenour lost, pursues the strain,
And Memmius' generous soul disdains to taste
The calm delights of philosophic rest;
Paternal fires his beating breast inflame,
To rescue Rome, and vindicate her name.

HORACE,

BOOK II. ODE X.

Rectius vives, Licini ———

Wouldst thou through life securely glide;
Nor boundless o'er the ocean ride;
Nor ply too near th' insidious shore,
Scar'd at the tempest's threat'ning roar.
The man, who follows Wisdom's voice,
And makes the golden mean his choice,
Nor plung'd in antique gloomy cells
Midst hoary desolation dwells;
Nor to allure the envious eye
Rears his proud palace to the sky.
The pine, that all the grove transcends,
With every blast the tempest rends;
Totters the tower with thundrous sound,
And spreads a mighty ruin round;
Jove's bolt with desolating blow
Strikes the ethereal mountain's brow.
The man, whose stedfast soul can bear
Fortune indulgent or severe,

Hopes when she frowns, and when she smiles
With cautious fear eludes her wiles.
Jove with rude winter wastes the plain,
Jove decks the rosy spring again.
Life's former ills are overpast,
Nor will the present always last.
Now Phœbus wings his shafts, and now
He lays aside th' unbended bow,
Strikes into life the trembling string,
And wakes the silent Muse to sing.
With unabating courage, brave
Adversity's tumultuous wave;
When too propitious breezes rise,
And the light vessel swiftly flies,
With timid caution catch the gale,
And shorten the distended sail.

HORACE,

BOOK III. ODE XIII.

O Fons Blandusiæ ———

Blandusia! more than crystal clear!
Whose soothing murmurs charm the ear!
Whose margin soft with flowrets crown'd
Invites the festive band around,

Their careless limbs diffus'd supine,
To quaff the soul-enlivening wine.
To thee a tender kid I vow,
That aims for fight his budding brow;
In thought, the wrathful combat proves,
Or wantons with his little loves:
But vain are all his purpos'd schemes,
Delusive all his flattering dreams,
To morrow shall his fervent blood
Stain the pure silver of thy flood.
When fiery Sirius blasts the plain,
Untouch'd thy gelid streams remain.
To thee, the fainting flocks repair,
To taste thy cool reviving air;
To thee, the ox with toil opprest,
And lays his languid limbs to rest.
As springs of old renown'd, thy name
Blest fountain! I devote to fame;
Thus while I sing in deathless lays
The verdant holm, whose waving sprays,
Thy sweet retirement to defend,
High o'er the moss-grown rock impend,
Whence prattling in loquacious play
Thy sprightly waters leap away.

THE PASTORALS OF VIRGIL.

Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem
Quod te imitari aveo ——————————

Lucret. Lib. III.

PASTORAL I.*

MELIBŒUS, TITYRUS.

MELIBŒUS.

WHERE the broad beech an ample shade displays,
Your slender reed resounds the sylvan lays,
O happy Tityrus! while we, forlorn,
Driven from our lands, to distant climes are born,
Stretch'd careless in the peaceful shade you sing,
And all the groves with Amaryllis ring.

* It has been observed by some critics, who have treated of pastoral poetry, that, in every poem of this kind, it is proper, that the scene or landscape, connected with the little plot or fable on which the poem is founded, be delineated with at least as much accuracy, as is sufficient to render the description particular and picturesque. How far Virgil has thought fit to attend to such a rule may appear from the remarks which the translator has subjoined to every Pastoral.

The scene of the first pastoral is pictured out with great accuracy.

TITYRUS.

This peace to a propitious god I owe;
None else, my friend, such blessings could bestow.
Him will I celebrate with rites divine,
And frequent lambs shall stain his sacred shrine.
By him, these feeding herds in safety stray;
By him, in peace I pipe the rural lay.

---

racy. The shepherds Melibœus and Tityrus are represented as conversing together beneath a spreading beech-tree. Flocks and herds are feeding hard by. At a little distance we behold, on the one hand a great rock, and on the other a fence of flowering willows. The prospect as it widens is diversified with groves, and streams, and some tall trees, particularly elms. Beyond all these appear marshy grounds, and rocky hills. The ragged and drooping flock of the unfortunate shepherd, particularly the she-goat which he leads along, are no inconsiderable figures in this picture.—The time is the evening of a summer-day, a little before sunset. See of the Original, v. 1, 5, 9, 52, 54, 57, 59, 81, &c.

This Pastoral is said to have been written on the following occasion. Augustus, in order to reward the services of his veterans, by means of whom he had established himself in the Roman empire, distributed among them the lands that lay contiguous to Mantua and Cremona. To make way for these intruders, the rightful owners, of whom Virgil was one, were turned out. But our poet, by the intercession of Mecænas, was reinstated in his possessions. Melibœus here personates one of the unhappy exiles, and Virgil is represented under the character of Tityrus.

MELIBŒUS.

I envy not, but wonder at your fate,
That no alarms invade this blest retreat;
While neighbouring fields the voice of woe resound,
And desolation rages all around.
Worn with fatigue I slowly onward bend,
And scarce my feeble fainting goats attend.
My hand this sickly dam can hardly bear,
Whose young new-yean'd (ah once an hopeful pair!)
Amid the tangling hazles as they lay,
On the sharp flint were left to pine away.
These ills I had foreseen, but that my mind
To all portents and prodigies was blind.
Oft have the blasted oaks foretold my woe;
And often has the inauspicious crow,
Perch'd on the wither'd holm, with fateful cries
Scream'd in my ear her dismal prophecies.
But say, O Tityrus, what god bestows
This blissful life of undisturb'd repose?

TITYRUS.

Imperial Rome, while yet to me unknown,
I vainly liken'd to our country-town,
Our little Mantua, at which is sold
The yearly offspring of our fruitful fold:
As in the whelp the father's shape appears,
And as the kid its mother's semblance bears.

Thus greater things my inexperienc'd mind
Rated by others of inferior kind.
But she, midst other cities, rears her head
High, as the cypress overtops the reed.

MELIBŒUS.

And why to visit Rome was you inclin'd?

TITYRUS.

'Twas there I hoped my liberty to find.
And there my liberty I found at last,
Though long with listless indolence opprest;
Yet not till Time had silver'd o'er my hairs,
And I had told a tedious length of years;
Nor till the gentle Amaryllis charm'd,*
And Galatea's love no longer warm'd.
For (to my friend I will confess the whole)
While Galatea captive held my soul,
Languid and lifeless all I dragg'd the chain,
Neglected liberty, neglected gain.
Though from my fold the frequent victim bled,
Though my fat cheese th' ungrateful city fed,
For this I ne'er perceiv'd my wealth increase;
I lavish'd all her haughty heart to please.

* The refinements of Taubmannus, De La Cerda, and others, who will have Amaryllis to signify Rome, and Galatea to signify Mantua, have perplexed this passage not a little: if the literal meaning be admitted, the whole becomes obvious and natural.

MELIBŒUS.

Why Amaryllis pin'd, and pass'd away,
In lonely shades the melancholy day;
Why to the gods she breath'd incessant vows;
For whom her mellow apples press'd the boughs
So late, I wonder'd—Tityrus was gone,
And she (ah luckless maid!) was left alone.
Your absence every warbling fountain mourn'd,
And woods and wilds the wailing strains return'd.

TITYRUS.

What could I do? to break th' enslaving chain
All other efforts had (alas!) been vain;
Nor durst my hopes presume, but there, to find
The gods so condescending and so kind.
'Twas there these eyes the Heaven-born youth* beheld,
To whom our altars monthly incense yield:
My suit he even prevented, while he spoke,
"Manure your ancient farm, and feed your former flock."

MELIBŒUS.

Happy old man! then shall your lands remain,
Extent sufficient for th' industrious swain!
Though bleak and bare yon ridgy rocks arise,
And lost in lakes the neighbouring pasture lies.
Your herds on wonted grounds shall safely range,
And never feel the dire effects of change.

* Augustus Cæsar.

No foreign flock shall spread infecting bane
To hurt your pregnant dams, thrice happy swain!
You by known streams and sacred fountains laid
Shall taste the coolness of the fragrant shade.
Beneath yon fence, where willow-boughs unite,
And to their flowers the swarming bees invite,
Oft shall the lulling hum persuade to rest,
And balmy slumbers steal into your breast;
While warbled from this rock the pruner's lay
In deep repose dissolves your soul away;
High on yon elm the turtle wails alone,
And your lov'd ringdoves breathe a hoarser moan.

TITYRUS.

The nimble harts shall graze in empty air,
And seas retreating leave their fishes bare,
The German dwell where rapid Tigris flows,
The Parthian banish'd by invading foes
Shall drink the Gallic Arar, from my breast
Ere his majestic image be effac'd.

MELIBŒUS.

But we must travel o'er a length of lands,
O'er Scythian snows, or Afric's burning sands;
Some wander where remote Oäxes laves
The Cretan meadows with his rapid waves;
In Britain some, from every comfort torn,
From all the world remov'd, are doom'd to mourn.

When long long years have tedious roll'd away,
Ah! shall I yet at last, at last, survey
My dear paternal lands, and dear abode,
Where once I reign'd in walls of humble sod!
These lands, these harvests must the soldier share!
For rude barbarians lavish we our care!
How are our fields become the spoil of wars!
How are we ruin'd by intestine jars!
Now, Melibœus, now ingraff the pear,
Now teach the vine its tender sprays to rear!—
Go then, my goats!—go, once an happy store!
Once happy!—happy now (alas!) no more!
No more shall I, beneath the bowery shade
In rural quiet indolently laid,
Behold you from afar the cliffs ascend,
And from the shrubby precipice depend;
No more to music wake my melting flute,
While on the thyme you feed, and willow's wholesome shoot.

TITYRUS.

This night at least with me you may repose
On the green foliage, and forget your woes.
Apples and nuts mature our boughs afford,
And curdled milk in plenty crowns my board.
Now from yon hamlets clouds of smoke arise,
And slowly roll along the evening-skies;
And see projected from the mountain's brow
A lengthen'd shade obscures the plain below.

PASTORAL II.*

ALEXIS.

YOUNG Corydon for fair Alexis pin'd,
But hope ne'er gladden'd his desponding mind;
Nor vows nor tears the scornful boy could move,
Distinguish'd by his wealthier master's love.

* The chief excellency of this poem consists in its delicacy and simplicity. Corydon addresses his favourite in such a purity of sentiment as one would think might effectually discountenance the prepossessions which generally prevail against the subject of this eclogue. The nature of his affection may easily be ascertained from his ideas of the happiness which he hopes to enjoy in the company of his beloved Alexis.

O tantum libeat ——
O deign at last amid these lonely fields, &c.

It appears to have been no other than that friendship, which was encouraged by the wisest legislators of ancient Greece, as a noble incentive to virtue, and recommended by the example even of Agesilaus, Pericles, and Socrates: an affection wholly distinct from the infamous attachments that prevailed among the licentious. The reader will find a full and satisfying account of this generous passion in Dr. Potter's Antiquities of Greece, B. iv. chap. 9. Mons. Bayle in his Dictionary at the article Virgile has at great length vindicated our poet from the charge of immorality which the critics have grounded upon this pastoral.

The scene of this pastoral is a grove interspersed with beech-trees; the season, harvest.

Oft to the beech's deep-embowering shade
Pensive and sad this hapless shepherd stray'd;
There told in artless verse his tender pain
To echoing hills and groves, but all in vain.
In vain the flute's complaining lays I try;
And am I doom'd, unpitying boy, to die?
Now to faint flocks the grove a shade supplies,
And in the thorny brake the lizard lies;
Now Thestylis with herbs of savoury taste
Prepares the weary harvest-man's repast;
And all is still, save where the buzzing sound
Of chirping grasshoppers is heard around;
While I expos'd to all the rage of heat
Wander the wilds in search of thy retreat.
Was it not easier to support the pain
I felt from Amaryllis' fierce disdain?
Easier Menalcas' cold neglect to bear,
Black though he was, though thou art blooming fair?
Yet be relenting, nor too much presume,
O beauteous boy, on thy celestial bloom;
The sable violet* yields a precious die,
While useless on the field the withering lilies lie.
Ah cruel boy! my love is all in vain,
No thoughts of thine regard thy wretched swain.

* Vaccinium (here translated violet) yielded a purple colour used in dying the garments of slaves, according to Plin. l. xvi. c. 28.

How rich my flock thou carest not to know,
Nor how my pails with generous milk o'erflow.
With bleat of thousand lambs my hills resound,
And all the year my milky stores abound.
Not Amphion's lays were sweeter than my song,
Those lays that led the listening herds along,
And if the face be true I lately view'd,
Where calm and clear th' uncurling ocean stood.
I lack not beauty, nor could'st thou deny,
That even with Daphnis I may dare to vie.
O deign at last amid these lonely fields,
To taste the pleasures which the country yields;
With me to dwell in cottages resign'd,
To roam the woods, to shoot the bounding hind;
With me the weanling kids from home to guide
To the green mallows on the mountain-side;
With me in echoing groves the song to raise,
And emulate even Pan's celestial lays.
Pan taught the jointed reed its tuneful strain,
Pan guards the tender flock, and shepherd swain.
Nor grudge, Alexis, that the rural pipe
So oft hath stain'd the roses of thy lip:
How did Amyntas strive thy skill to gain!
How grieve at last to find his labour vain!
Of seven unequal reeds a pipe I have,
The precious gift which good Damoetas gave;
"Take this," the dying shepherd said, "for none
Inherits all my skill but thou alone."

He said; Amyntas murmurs at my praise,
And with an envious eye the gift surveys.
Besides, as presents for my soul's delight
Two beauteous kids I keep bestreak'd with white,
Nourish'd with care, nor purchas'd without pain;
An ewe's full udder twice a day they drain.
These to obtain oft Thestylis hath tried
Each winning art, while I her suit denied;
But I at last shall yield what she requests,
Since thy relentless pride my gifts detests.
Come, beauteous boy, and bless my rural bowers,
For thee the nymphs collect the choicest flowers:
Fair Naïs culls amid the bloomy dale
The drooping poppy, and the violet pale,
To marygolds the hyacinth applies,
Shading the glossy with the tawny dies:
Narcissus' flower with daffodil entwin'd,
And cassia's breathing sweets to these are join'd,
With every bloom that paints the vernal grove,
And all to form a garland for my love.
Myself with sweetest fruits will crown thy feast;
The luscious peach shall gratify thy taste,
And chesnut brown (once high in my regard,
For Amaryllis this to all prefer'd;
But if the blushing plum thy choice thou make,
The plum shall more be valued for thy sake.)
The myrtle wreath'd with laurel shall exhale
A blended fragrance to delight thy smell.

Ah Corydon! thou rustic, simple swain!
Thyself, thy prayers, thy offers all are vain.
How few, compar'd with rich Iolas' store,
Thy boasted gifts, and all thy wealth how poor!
Wretch that I am! while thus I pine forlorn,
And all the live-long day inactive mourn,
The boars have laid my silver fountains waste,
My flowers are fading in the southern blast.—
Fly'st thou, ah foolish boy, the lonesome grove?
Yet gods for this have left the realms above.
Paris with scorn the pomp of Troy survey'd,
And sought th' Idæan bowers and peaceful shade.
In her proud palaces let Pallas shine;
The lowly woods, and rural life be mine.
The lioness all dreadful in her course
Pursues the wolf, and he with headlong force
Flies at the wanton goat, that loves to climb
The cliff's steep side, and crop the flowering thyme;
Thee Corydon pursues, O beauteous boy:
Thus each is drawn along by some peculiar joy.
Now evening soft comes on; and homeward now
From field the weary oxen bear the plough.
The setting Sun now beams more mildly bright,
The shadows lengthening with the level light.
While with love's flame my restless bosom glows,
For love no interval of ease allows.
Ah Corydon! to weak complaints a prey!
What madness thus to waste the fleeting day!

Be rous'd at length; thy half-prun'd vines demand
The needful culture of thy curbing hand.
Haste, lingering swain, the flexile willows weave,
And with thy wonted care thy wants relieve.
Forget Alexis' unrelenting scorn,
Another love thy passion will return.

PASTORAL III.

MENALCAS, DAMOETAS, PALÆMON.*

MENALCAS.

To whom belongs this flock, Damoetas, pray:
To Melibœus?

DAMOETAS.

No; the other day
The shepherd Ægon gave it me to keep.

MANALCAS.

Ah still neglected, still unhappy sheep!†
He plies Neæra with assiduous love,

* The contending shepherds, Menalcas and Damoetas, together with their umpire Palæmon, are seated on the grass, not far from a row of beech-trees. Flocks are seen feeding hard by. The time of the day seems to be noon, the season between Spring and Summer.

† Throughout the whole of this altercation, notwithstanding the

And fears lest she my happier flame approve;
Meanwhile this hireling wretch (disgrace to swains!)
Defrauds his master, and purloins his gains,
Milks twice an hour, and drains the famish'd dams,
Whose empty dugs in vain attract the lambs.

DAMOETAS.

Forbear on men such language to bestow.
Thee, stain of manhood! thee, full well I know.
I know, with whom—and where—* (their grove defil'd
The nymphs reveng'd not, but indulgent smil'd)
And how the goats beheld, then browsing near,
The shameful sight with a lascivious leer.

MENALCAS.

No doubt, when Mycon's tender trees I broke,
And gash'd his young vines with a blunted hook.

DAMOETAS.

Or when conceal'd behind this ancient row
Of beech, you broke young Daphnis' shafts and bow,

---

the untoward subject, the reader will find in the original such a happy union of simplicity and force of expression and harmony of verse, as it is vain to look for in an English translation.

* The abruptness and obscurity of the original is here imitated.

With sharpest pangs of rancorous anguish stung
To see the gift confer'd on one so young;
And had you not thus wreak'd your sordid spite,
Of very envy you had died outright.

MENALCAS.

Gods! what may masters dare, when such a pitch
Of impudence their thievish hirelings reach:
Did I not, wretch (deny it if you dare)
Did I not see you Damon's goat ensnare?
Lycisca bark'd; then I the felon spy'd,
And "Whither slinks yon sneaking thief?" I cried.
The thief discover'd straight his prey forsook,
And skulk'd amid the sedges of the brook.

DAMOETAS.

That goat my pipe from Damon fairly gain'd;
A match was set, and I the prize obtain'd.
He own'd it due to my superior skill,
And yet refus'd his bargain to fulfil.

MANALCAS.

By your superior skill—the goat was won!
Have you a jointed pipe, indecent clown!
Whose whizzing straws with harshest discord jarr'd,
As in the streets your wretched rhymes you marr'd.

DAMOETAS.

Boasts are but vain. I'm ready, when you will,
To make a solemn trial of our skill.

I stake this heifer, no ignoble prize;
Two calves from her full udder she supplies,
And twice a day her milk the pail o'erflows;
What pledge of equal worth will you expose?

MENALCAS.

Ought from the flock I dare not risk; I fear
A cruel step-dame, and a sire severe,
Who of their store so strict a reckoning keep,
That twice a day they count the kids and sheep.
But, since you purpose to be mad to day,
Two beechen cups I scruple not to lay,
(Whose far superior worth yourself will own)
The labour'd work of fam'd Alcimedon.
Rais'd round the brims by the engraver's care
The flaunting vine unfolds its foliage fair;
Entwin'd the ivy's tendrils seem to grow,
Half-hid in leaves its mimic berries glow;
Two figures rise below, of curious frame,
Conon, and—what's that other sage's name,
Who with his rod describ'd the world's vast round,
Taught when to reap, and when to till the ground?
At home I have reserv'd them unprofan'd,
No lip has e'er their glossy polish stain'd.

DAMOETAS.

Two cups for me that skilful artist made;
Their handles with acanthus are array'd;

Orpheus is in the midst, whose magic song
Leads in tumultuous dance the lofty groves along.
At home I have reserv'd them unprofan'd,
No lip has e'er their glossy polish stain'd.
But my pledg'd heifer if aright you prize,
The cups so much extoll'd you will despise.

MENALCAS.

These arts, proud boaster, all are lost on me;
To any terms I readily agree.
You shall not boast your victory to day,
Let him be judge who passes first this way:
And see the good Palæmon! trust me, swain,
You'll be more cautious how you brag again.

DAMOETAS.

Delays I brook not; if you dare, proceed;
At singing no antagonist I dread.
Palæmon, listen to th' important songs,
To such debates attention strict belongs.

PALÆMON.

Sing then. A couch the flowery herbage yields:
Now blossom all the trees, and all the fields;
And all the woods their pomp of foliage wear,
And Nature's fairest robe adorns the blooming year.
Damoetas first th' alternate lay shall raise:
Th' inspiring Muses love alternate lays.

DAMOETAS.

Jove first I sing; ye Muses, aid my lay;
All Nature owns his energy and sway;
The Earth and Heavens his sovereign bounty share,
And to my verses he vouchsafes his care.

MENALCAS.

With great Apollo I begin the strain,
For I am great Apollo's favourite swain;
For him the purple hyacinth I wear,
And sacred bay to Phœbus ever dear.

DAMOETAS.

The sprightly Galatea at my head
An apple flung, and to the willows fled;
But as along the level lawn she flew,
The wanton wish'd not to escape my view.

MENALCAS.

I languish'd long for fair Amyntas' charms,
But now he comes unbidden to my arms,
And with my dogs is so familiar grown,
That my own Delia is no better known.

DAMOETAS.

I lately mark'd where midst the verdant shade
Two parent-doves had built their leafy bed;
I from the nest the young will shortly take,
And to my love an handsome present make.

MENALCAS.

Ten ruddy wildings, from a lofty bough,
That through the green leaves beam'd with yellow glow
I brought away, and to Amyntas bore;
To-morrow I shall send as many more.

DAMOETAS.

Ah the keen raptures! when my yielding fair
Breath'd her kind whispers to my ravish'd ear!
Waft, gentle gales, her accents to the skies,
That gods themselves may hear with sweet surprise.

MENALCAS.

What, though I am not wretched by your scorn?
Say, beauteous boy, say can I cease to mourn,
If, while I hold the nets, the boar you face,
And rashly brave the dangers of the chace.

DAMOETAS.

Send Phyllis home, Iolas, for to-day
I celebrate my birth, and all is gay;
When for my crop the victim I prepare,
Iolas in our festival may share.

MENALCAS.

Phyllis I love; she more than all can charm,
And mutual fires her gentle bosom warm:
Tears, when I leave her, bathe her beauteous eyes,
"A long, a long adieu, my love!" she cries.

DAMOETAS.

The wolf is dreadful to the woolly train,
Fatal to harvests is the crushing rain,
To the green woods the winds destructive prove,
To me the rage of mine offended love.

MENALCAS.

The willow's grateful to the pregnant ewes,
Showers to the corns, to kids the mountain-brows;
More grateful far to me my lovely boy,
In sweet Amyntas centers all my joy.

DAMOETAS.

Even Pollio deigns to hear my rural lays;
And cheers the bashful Muse with generous praise;
Ye sacred Nine, for your great patron feed
A beauteous heifer of the noblest breed.

MENALCAS.

Pollio, the art of heavenly song adorns;
Then let a bull be bred with butting horns,
And ample front, that bellowing spurns the ground,
Tears up the turf, and throws the sands around.

DAMOETAS.

Him whom my Pollio loves may nought annoy,
May he like Pollio every wish enjoy,
O may his happy lands with honey flow,
And on his thorns Assyrian roses blow!

MENALCAS.

Who hates not foolish Bavius, let him love
Thee, Mævius, and thy tasteless rhymes approve!
Nor needs it thy admirer's reason shock
To milk the he-goats, and the foxes yoke.

DAMOETAS.

Ye boys, on garlands who employ your care,
And pull the creeping strawberries, beware,
Fly for your lives, and leave that fatal place,
A deadly snake lies lurking in the grass.

MENALCAS.

Forbear, my flocks, and warily proceed,
Nor on that faithless bank securely tread;
The heedless ram late plung'd amid the pool,
And in the sun now dries his reeking wool.

DAMOETAS.

Ho Tityrus! lead back the browsing flock,
And let them feed at distance from the brook;
At bathing-time I to the shade will bring
My goats, and wash them in the cooling spring.

MENALCAS.

Haste, from the sultry lawn the flocks remove
To the cool shelter of the shady grove:
When burning noon the curdling udder dries,
Th' ungrateful teats in vain the shepherd plies.

DAMOETAS.

How lean my bull in yonder mead appears,
Though the fat soil the richest pasture bears!
Ah Love! thou reign'st supreme in every heart,
Both flocks and shepherds languish with thy dart.

MENALCAS.

Love has not injur'd my consumptive flocks,
Yet bare their bones, and faded are their looks:
What envious eye hath squinted on my dams,
And sent its poison to my tender lambs!

DAMOETAS.

Say in what distant land the eye descries
But three short ells of all th' expanded skies;
Tell this, and great Apollo be your name;
Your skill is equal, equal be your fame.

MENALCAS.

Say in what soil a wondrous flower is born,
Whose leaves the sacred names of kings adorn;
Tell this, and take my Phyllis to your arms,
And reign th' unrivall'd sovereign of her charms.

PALÆMON.

'Tis not for me these high disputes to end;
Each to the heifer justly may pretend.
Such be their fortune, who so well can sing,
From love what painful joys, what pleasing torments
spring.

Now, boys, obstruct the course of yonder rill
The meadows have already drunk their fill.

PASTORAL IV.*

POLLIO.

Sicilian Muse, sublimer strains inspire,
And warm my bosom with diviner fire!
All take not pleasure in the rural scene,
In lowly tamarisks, and forests green.

* In this fourth pastoral, no particular landscape is delineated. The whole is a prophetic song of triumph. But as almost all the images and allusions are of the rural kind, it is no less a true bucolic than the others; if we admit the definition of a pastoral, given us by an author of the first rank,* who calls it "A poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects upon country life."

It is of little importance to inquire on what occasion this poem was written. The spirit of prophetic enthusiasm that breathes through it, and the resemblance it bears in many places to the Oriental manner, makes it not improbable, that our poet composed it partly from some pieces of antient prophecy that might have fallen into his hands, and that he afterwards inscribed it to his friend and patron Pollio, on occasion of the birth of his son Saloninus.

* The author of the Rambler.

If sylvan themes we sing, then let our lays
Deserve a consul's ear, a consul's praise.
The age comes on, that future age of gold
In Cuma's mystic prophecies foretold.
The years begin their mighty course again,
The Virgin now returns, and the Saturnian reign.
Now from the lofty mansions of the sky
To Earth descends an heaven-born progeny.
Thy Phebus reigns, Lucina, lend thine aid,
Nor be his birth, his glorious birth delay'd!
An iron race shall then no longer rage,
But all the world regain the golden age.
This child, the joy of nations, shall be born
Thy consulship, O Pollio, to adorn:
Thy consulship these happy times shall prove,
And see the mighty months begin to move:
Then all our former guilt shall be forgiv'n,
And man shall dread no more th' avenging doom of Heav'n.
The son with heroes and with gods shall shine,
And lead, enroll'd with them, the life divine.
He o'er the peaceful nations shall preside,
And his sire's virtues shall his sceptre guide.
To thee, auspicious babe, th' unbidden earth
Shall bring the earliest of her flowery birth;
Acanthus soft in smiling beauty gay,
The blossom'd bean, and ivy's flaunting spray.

Th' untended goats shall to their homes repair,
And to the milker's hand the loaded udder bear.
The mighty lion shall no more be fear'd,
But graze innoxious with the friendly herd.
Sprung from thy cradle fragrant flowers shall spread,
And, fanning bland, shall wave around thy head.
Then shall the serpent die, with all his race:
No deadly herb the happy soil disgrace:
Assyrian balm on every bush shall bloom,
And breathe in every gale its rich perfume.
But when thy father's deeds thy youth shall fire,
And to great actions all thy soul inspire,
When thou shalt read of heroes and of kings,
And mark the glory that from virtue springs;
Then boundless o'er the far-extended plain,
Shall wave luxuriant crops of golden grain,
With purple grapes the loaded thorn shall bend,
And streaming honey from the oak descend.
Nor yet old fraud shall wholly be effac'd;
Navies for wealth shall roam the watery waste;
Proud cities fenc'd with towery walls appear,
And cruel shares shall earth's soft bosom tear:
Another Tiphys o'er the swelling tide
With steady skill the bounding ship shall guide;
Another Argo with the flower of Greece
From Colchos' shore shall waft the golden fleece;
Again the world shall hear war's loud alarms,
And great Achilles shine again in arms.

When riper years thy strengthen'd nerves shall brace,
And o'er thy limbs diffuse a manly grace,
The mariner no more shall plough the deep,
Nor load with foreign wares the trading ship,
Each country shall abound in every store,
Nor need the products of another shore.
Henceforth no plough shall cleave the fertile ground,
No pruninghook the tender vine shall wound;
The husbandman, with toil no longer broke,
Shall loose his ox for ever from the yoke.
No more the wool a foreign die shall feign,
But purple flocks shall graze the flowery plain,
Glittering in native gold the ram shall tread,
And scarlet lambs shall wanton on the mead.
In concord join'd with fate's unalter'd law
The Destinies these happy times foresaw,
They bade the sacred spindle swiftly run,
And hasten the auspicious ages on.
O dear to all thy kindred gods above!
O thou, the offspring of eternal Jove!
Receive thy dignities, begin thy reign,
And o'er the world extend thy wide domain.
See nature's mighty frame exulting round,
Ocean, and earth, and heaven's immense profound!
See nations yet unborn with joy behold
Thy glad approach, and hail the age of gold!
O would th' immortals lend a length of days,
And give a soul sublime to sound thy praise;

Would Heaven this breast, this labouring breast inflame
With ardour equal to the mighty theme;
Not Orpheus with diviner transports glow'd,
When all her fire his mother-muse bestow'd;
Nor loftier numbers flow'd from Linus' tongue,
Although his sire Apollo gave the song;
Even Pan, in presence of Arcadian swains
Would vainly strive to emulate my strains.
Repay a parent's care, O beauteous boy,
And greet thy mother with a smile of joy;
For thee, to loathing languors all resign'd
Ten slow-revolving months thy mother pin'd.
If cruel fate thy parents bliss denies,*
If no fond joy sits smiling in thine eyes,
No nymph of heavenly birth shall crown thy love,
Nor shalt thou share th' immortal feast above.

* This passage has perplexed all the critics. Out of a number of significations that have been offered, the translator has pitched upon one, which he thinks the most agreeable to the scope of the poem and most consistent with the language of the original. The reader, who wants more particulars on this head, may consult Servius, De La Cerda, or Ruæus.

PASTORAL V.*

MENALCAS, MOPSUS.

MENALCAS.

Since you with skill can touch the tuneful reed,
Since few my verses or my voice exceed;
In this refreshing shade shall we recline,
Where hazels with the lofty elms combine?

MOPSUS.

Your riper age a due respect requires,
'Tis mine to yield to what my friend desires;
Whether you choose the zephyr's fanning breeze,
That shakes the wavering shadows of the trees;
Or the deep-shaded grotto's cool retreat:—
And see yon cave screen'd from the scorching heat,
Where the wild vine its curling tendrils weaves,
Whose grapes glow ruddy through the quivering leaves.

MENALCAS.

Of all the swains that to our hills belong,
Amyntas only vies with you in song.

* Here we discover Menalcas and Mopsus seated in an arbour formed by the interwoven twigs of a wild vine. A grove of hazels and elms surrounds this arbour. The season seems to be Summer. The time of the day is not specified.

MOPSUS.

What, though with me that haughty shepherd vie,
Who proudly dares Apollo's self defy?

MENALCAS.

Begin; let Alcon's praise inspire your strains,*
Or Codrus' death, or Phyllis' amorous pains;
Begin, whatever theme your Muse prefer.
To feed the kids be, Tityrus, thy care.

MOPSUS.

I rather will repeat that mournful song,
Which late I carv'd the verdant beech along;
(I carv'd and trill'd by turns the labour'd lay)
And let Amyntas match me if he may.

MENALCAS.

As slender willows where the olive grows,
Or sordid shrubs when near the scarlet rose,
Such (if the judgment I have form'd be true)
Such is Amyntas when compar'd with you.

MOPSUS.

No more, Menalcas; we delay too long,
The grot's dim shade invites my promis'd song.

* From this passage it is evident that Virgil thought pastoral poetry capable of a much greater variety in its subjects, than some modern critics will allow.

When Daphnis fell by fate's remorseless blow,*
The weeping nymphs pour'd wild the plaint of woe;
Witness, O hazel-grove, and winding stream,
For all your echoes caught the mournful theme.
In agony of grief his mother prest
The clay-cold carcase to her throbbing breast,
Frantic with anguish wail'd his hapless fate,
Rav'd at the stars, and Heaven's relentless hate.
'Twas then the swains in deep despair forsook
Their pining flocks, nor led them to the brook;
The pining flocks for him their pastures slight,
Nor grassy plains, nor cooling streams invite.
The doleful tidings reach'd the Libyan shores,
And lions mourn'd in deep repeated roars.
His cruel doom the woodlands wild bewail,
And plaintive hills repeat the melancholy tale.
'Twas he, who first Armenia's tigers broke,
And tam'd their stubborn natures to the yoke;
He first with ivy wrapt the thyrsus round,
And made the hills with Bacchus' rites resound.†

* It is the most general and most probable conjecture, that Julius Cæsar is the Daphnis, whose death and deification are here celebrated. Some however are of opinion, that by Daphnis is meant a real shepherd of Sicily of that name, who is said to have invented bucolic poetry, and in honour of whom the Sicilians performed yearly sacrifices.

† This can be applied only to Julius Cæsar; for it was he who introduced at Rome the celebration of the Bacchanalian revels.

Servius.

As vines adorn the trees which they entwine,
As purple clusters beautify the vine,
As bulls the herd, as corns the fertile plains,
The godlike Daphnis dignified the swains.
When Daphnis from our eager hopes was torn,
Phœbus and Pales left the plains to mourn.
Now weeds and wretched tares the crop subdue,
Where store of generous wheat but lately grew.
Narcissus' lovely flower no more is seen,
No more the velvet violet decks the green;
Thistles for these the blasted meadow yields,
And thorns and frizled burs deform the fields.
Swains, shade the springs, and let the ground be drest
With verdant leaves; 'twas Daphnis' last request.
Erect a tomb in honour to his name
Mark'd with this verse to celebrate his fame.
"The swains with Daphnis' name this tomb adorn,
Whose high renown above the skies is borne;
Fair was his flock, he fairest on the plain,
The pride, the glory of the sylvan reign."

MENALCAS.

Sweeter, O bard divine, thy numbers seem,
Than to the scorched swain the cooling stream,
Or soft on fragrant flowrets to recline,
And the tir'd limbs to balmy sleep resign.
Blest youth! whose voice and pipe demand the praise
Due but to thine, and to thy master's lays.

I in return the darling theme will chuse,
And Daphnis' praises shall inspire my Muse;
He in my song shall high as Heaven ascend,
High as the Heavens, for Daphnis was my friend.

MOPSUS.

His virtues sure our noblest numbers claim;
Nought can delight me more than such a theme,
Which in your song new dignity obtains;
Oft has our Stimichon extol'd the strains.

MENALCAS.

Now Daphnis shines, among the gods a god,
Struck with the splendours of his new abode.
Beneath his footstool far remote appear
The clouds slow-sailing, and the starry sphere.
Hence lawns and groves with gladsome raptures ring,
The swains, the nymphs, and Pan in concert sing.
The wolves to murder are no more inclin'd,
No guileful nets ensnare the wandering hind,
Deceit and violence and rapine cease,
For Daphnis loves the gentle arts of peace.
From savage mountains shouts of transport rise
Born in triumphant echoes to the skies;
The rocks and shrubs emit melodious sounds,
Through nature's vast extent the god, the god rebounds.
Be gracious still, still present to our pray'r;
Four altars, lo! we build with pious care,

Two for th' inspiring god of song divine,
And two, propitious Daphnis, shall be thine.
Two bowls white-foaming with their milky store,
Of generous oil two brimming goblets more,
Each year we shall present before thy shrine,
And cheer the feast with liberal draughts of wine;
Before the fire when winter-storms invade,
In summer's heat beneath the breezy shade:
The hallow'd bowls with wine of Chios crown'd,
Shall pour their sparkling nectar to the ground.
Damœtas shall with Lyctian* Ægon play,
And celebrate with festive strains the day.
Alphesibœus to the sprightly song
Shall like the dancing Satyrs trip along.
These rites shall still be paid, so justly due,
Both when the nymphs receive our annual vow,
And when with solemn songs, and victims crown'd,
Our lands in long procession we surround.
While fishes love the streams and briny deep,
And savage boars the mountain's rocky steep,
While grasshoppers their dewy food delights,
While balmy thyme the busy bee invites;
So long shall last thine honours and thy fame,
So long the shepherds shall resound thy name.
Such rites to thee shall husbandmen ordain,
As Ceres and the god of wine obtain.

* Lyctium was a city of Crete.

Thou to our prayers propitiously inclin'd
Thy grateful suppliants to their vows shalt bind.

MOPSUS.

What boon, dear shepherd, can your song requite?
For nought in nature yields so sweet delight.
Not the soft sighing of the southern gale,
That faintly breathes along the flowery vale;
Nor, when light breezes curl the liquid plain,
To tread the margin of the murmuring main;
Nor melody of streams, that roll away
Through rocky dales, delights me as your lay.

MENALCAS.

No mean reward, my friend, your verses claim;
Take then this flute that breath'd the plaintive theme
Of Corydon;* when proud Damœtas† try'd
To match my skill, it dash'd his hasty pride.

MOPSUS.

And let this sheepcrook by my friend be worn,
Which brazen studs in beamy rows adorn;
This fair Antigenes oft beg'd to gain,
But all his beauty, all his prayers were vain.

* See Pastoral second. † See Pastoral third.

PASTORAL VI.*

SILENUS.

My sportive Muse first sung Sicilian strains,
Nor blush'd to dwell in woods and lowly plains.
To sing of kings and wars when I aspire,
Apollo checks my vainly-rising fire.
"To swains the flock and sylvan pipe belong,
Then choose some humbler theme, nor dare heroic song."
The voice divine, O Varus, I obey,
And to my reed shall chant a rural lay;
Since others long thy praises to rehearse,
And sing thy battles in immortal verse.
Yet if these songs, which Phœbus bids me write,
Hereafter to the swains shall yield delight,
Of thee the trees and humble shrubs shall sing,
And all the vocal grove with Varus ring.
The song inscrib'd to Varus' sacred name
To Phœbus' favour has the justest claim.
Come then, my Muse, a sylvan song repeat.
'Twas in his shady arbour's cool retreat

* The cave of Silenus, which is the scene of this eclogue, is delineated with sufficient accuracy. The time seems to be the evening; at least the song does not cease, till the flocks are folded, and the evening star appears.

Two youthful swains the god Silenus found,
In drunkenness and sleep his senses bound,
His turgid veins the late debauch betray;
His garland on the ground neglected lay,
Fallen from his head; and by the well-worn ear
His cup of ample size depended near.
Sudden the swains the sleeping god surprise,
And with his garland bind him as he lies,
(No better chain at hand) incens'd so long
To be defrauded of their promis'd song.
To aid their project, and remove their fears,
Ægle, a beauteous fountain-nymph, appears;
Who, while he hardly opes his heavy eyes,
His stupid brow with bloody berries dies.
Then smiling at the fraud Silenus said,
"And dare you thus a sleeping god invade?
To see me was enough; but haste, unloose
My bonds; the song no longer I refuse;
Unloose me, youths; my song shall pay your pains;
For this fair nymph another boon remains."
He sung; responsive to the heavenly sound
The stubborn oaks and forests dance around,
Tripping the Satyrs and the Fauns advance,
Wild beasts forget their rage, and join the general dance.
Not so Parnassus' listening rocks rejoice,
When Phœbus raises his celestial voice;

Nor Thracia's echoing mountains so admire,
When Orpheus strikes the loud-lamenting lyre.
For first he sung of Nature's wondrous birth;
How seeds of water, air, and flame, and earth,
Down the vast void with casual impulse hurl'd,
Clung into shapes, and form'd this fabric of the world.
Then hardens by degrees the tender soil,
And from the mighty mound the seas recoil.
O'er the wide world new various forms arise;
The infant Sun along the brighten'd skies
Begins his course, while Earth with glad amaze
The blazing wonder from below surveys.
The clouds sublime their genial moisture shed,
And the green grove lifts high its leafy head.
The savage beasts o'er desert mountains roam,
Yet few their numbers, and unknown their home.
He next the blest Saturnian ages sung;
How a new race of men from Pyrrha sprung;*
Prometheus' daring theft, and dreadful doom,
Whose growing heart devouring birds consume.
Then names the spring, renown'd for Hylas' fate,
By the sad mariners bewail'd too late;
They call on Hylas with repeated cries,
And Hylas, Hylas, all the lonesome shore replies.
Next he bewails Pasiphæ (hapless dame!)
Who for a bullock felt a brutal flame.

* See Ovid Met. Lib. I.

What fury fires thy bosom, frantic queen!
How happy thou, if herds had never been!
The maids, whom Juno, to avenge her wrong,*
Like heifers doom'd to lowe the vales along,
Ne'er felt the rage of thy detested fire,
Ne'er were polluted with thy foul desire;
Though oft for horns they felt their polish'd brow,
And their soft necks oft fear'd the galling plough.
Ah wretched queen! thou roam'st the mountain-waste,
While, his white limbs on lilies laid to rest,
The half-digested herb again he chews,
Or some fair female of the herd pursues.
"Beset, ye Cretan nymphs, beset the grove,
And trace the wandering footsteps of my love.
Yet let my longing eyes my love behold,
Before some favourite beauty of the fold
Entice him with Gortynian† herds to stray,
Where smile the vales in richer pasture gay."
He sung how golden fruit's resistless grace
Decoy'd the wary virgin from the race.‡

* Their names were Lysippe, Ipponoë, and Cyrianassa. Juno to be avenged of them for preferring their own beauty to hers, struck them with madness, to such a degree, that they imagined themselves to be heifers.

† Gortyna was a city of Crete. See Ovid. Art. Am. Lib. I.

‡ Atalanta. See Ovid. Metamorph. Lib. X.

Then wraps in bark the mourning sisters round,*
And rears the lofty alders from the ground.
He sung, while Gallus by Permessus† stray'd,
A sister of the Nine the hero led
To the Aonian hill; the choir in haste
Left their bright thrones, and hail'd the welcome guest.
Linus arose, for sacred song renown'd,
Whose brow a wreath of flowers and parsley bound;
And "Take" he said, "this pipe, which heretofore
The far-fam'd shepherd of Ascræa‡ bore;
Then heard the mountain-oaks its magic sound,
Leap'd from their hills, and thronging danced around.
On this thou shalt renew the tuneful lay,
And grateful songs to thy Apollo pay,
Whose fam'd Grynæan§ temple from thy strain
Shall more exalted dignity obtain."
Why should I sing unhappy Scylla's fate?||
Sad monument of jealous Circe's hate!
Round her white breast what furious monsters roll,
And to the dashing waves incessant howl:

* See Ovid. Met. Lib. II.

† A river in Bœotia arising from Mount Helicon, sacred to the Muses.

‡ Hesiod.

§ Grynium was a maritime town of the Lesser Asia, where were an antient temple and oracle of Apollo.

|| See Virgil Æn. III.

How from the ships that bore Ulysses' crew*
Her dogs the trembling sailors dragg'd, and slew.
Of Philomela's feast why should I sing,†
And what dire chance befel the Thracian king?
Changed to a lapwing by th' avenging god
He made the barren waste his lone abode,
And oft on soaring pinions hover'd o'er
The lofty palace then his own no more.
The tuneful god renews each pleasing theme,
Which Phœbus sung by blest Eurotas' stream;
When bless'd Eurotas gently flow'd along,
And bade his laurels learn the lofty song.
Silenus sung; the vocal vales reply,
And heavenly music charms the listening sky.
But now their folds the number'd flocks invite,
The star of evening sheds its trembling light,
And the unwilling Heavens are wrapt in night.

* See Homer Odyss. Lib. XII.
† See Ovid's Metamorph. Lib. VI.

PASTORAL VII.*

MELIBŒUS, CORYDON, THYRSIS.

MELIBŒUS.

Beneath an holm that murmur'd to the breeze
The youthful Daphnis lean'd in rural ease:
With him two gay Arcadian swains reclin'd,
Who in the neighbouring vale their flocks had join'd,
Thyrsis, whose care it was the goats to keep,
And Corydon, who fed the fleecy sheep;
Both in the flowery prime of youthful days,
Both skill'd in single or responsive lays.
While I with busy hand a shelter form
To guard my myrtles from the future storm,
The husband of my goats had chanced to stray:
To find the vagrant out I take my way.
Which Daphnis seeing cries, "Dismiss your fear,
Your kids and goat are all in safety here;

* The scene of this pastoral is as follows. Four shepherds, Daphnis in the most distinguished place, Corydon, Thyrsis, and Melibœus, are seen reclining beneath an holm. Sheep and goats intermixed are feeding hard by. At a little distance Mincius fringed with reeds appears winding along. Fields and trees compose the surrounding scene. A venerable oak, with bees swarming around it, is particularly distinguished. The time seems to be the forenoon of a summer-day.

And, if no other care require your stay,
Come, and with us unbend the toils of day
In this cool shade; at hand your heifers feed,
And of themselves will to the watering speed;
Here fringed with reeds slow Mincius winds along,
And round yon oak the bees soft-murmuring throng."
What could I do? for I was left alone,
My Phyllis and Alcippe both were gone,
And none remain'd to feed my weanling lambs,
And to restrain them from their bleating dams:
Betwixt the swains a solemn match was set,
To prove their skill, and end a long debate.
Though serious matters claim'd my due regard,
Their pastime to my business I prefer'd.
To sing by turns the Muse inspir'd the swains,
And Corydon began th' alternate strains.

CORYDON.

Ye nymphs of Helicon, my sole desire!
O warm my breast with all my Codrus' fire.
If none can equal Codrus' heavenly lays,
For next to Phœbus he deserves the praise,
No more I ply the tuneful art divine,
My silent pipe shall hang on yonder pine.

THYRSIS.

Arcadian swains, an ivy wreath bestow,
With early honours crown your poet's brow;

Codrus shall chafe, if you my songs commend,
Till burning spite his tortur'd entrails rend;
Or amulets, to bind my temples, frame,
Lest his invidious praises blast my fame.

CORYDON.

A stag's tall horns, and stain'd with savage gore
This bristled visage of a tusky boar,
To thee, O virgin-goddess of the chase,
Young Mycon offers for thy former grace.
If like success his future labours crown,
Thine, goddess, then shall be a nobler boon,
In polish'd marble thou shalt shine complete,
And purple sandals shall adorn thy feet.

THYRSIS.

To thee, Priapus,* each returning year,
This bowl of milk, these hallow'd cakes we bear;
Thy care our garden is but meanly stor'd,
And mean oblations all we can afford.
But if our flocks a numerous offspring yield,
And our decaying fold again be fill'd,
Though now in marble thou obscurely shine,
For thee a golden statue we design.

CORYDON.

O Galatea, whiter than the swan,
Loveliest of all thy sisters of the main,

* This deity presided over gardens.

Sweeter than Hybla, more than lilies fair!
If ought of Corydon employ thy care,
When shades of night involve the silent sky,
And slumbering in their stalls the oxen lie,
Come to my longing arms, and let me prove
Th' immortal sweets of Galatea's love.

THYRSIS.

As the vile sea-weed scatter'd by the storm,
As he whose face Sardinian herbs deform,*
As burs and brambles that disgrace the plain,
So nauseous, so detested be thy swain;
If when thine absence I am doom'd to bear
The day appears not longer than a year.
Go home, my flocks, ye lengthen out the day,
For shame, ye tardy flocks, for shame away!

CORYDON.

Ye mossy fountains, warbling as ye flow!
And softer than the slumbers ye bestow
Ye grassy banks! ye trees with verdure crown'd,
Whose leaves a glimmering shade diffuse around!
Grant to my weary flocks a cool retreat,
And screen them from the summer's raging heat;
For now the year in brightest glory shines,
Now reddening clusters deck the bending vines.

* It was the property of this poisonous herb to distort the features of those who had eaten of it, in such a manner, that they seemed to expire in an agony of laughter.

THYRSIS.

Here's wood for fuel; here the fire displays
To all around its animating blaze;
Black with continual smoke our posts appear;
Nor dread we more the rigour of the year,
Than the fell wolf the fearful lambkins dreads,
When he the helpless fold by night invades;
Or swelling torrents, headlong as they roll,
The weak resistance of the shatter'd mole.

CORYDON.

Now yellow harvests wave on every field,
Now bending boughs the hoary chesnut yield,
Now loaded trees resign their annual store,
And on the ground the mellow fruitage pour;
Jocund, the face of Nature smiles, and gay;
But if the fair Alexis were away,
Inclement drought the hardening soil would drain,
And streams no longer murmur o'er the plain.

THYRSIS.

A languid hue the thirsty fields assume,
Parch'd to the root the flowers resign their bloom,
The faded vines refuse their hills to shade,
Their leafy verdure wither'd and decay'd:
But if my Phyllis on these plains appear,
Again the groves their gayest green shall wear,
Again the clouds their copious moisture lend,
And in the genial rain shall Jove descend.

CORYDON.

Alcides' brows the poplar-leaves surround,
Apollo's beamy locks with bays are crown'd,
The myrtle, lovely queen of smiles, is thine,
And jolly Bacchus loves the curling vine;
But while my Phyllis loves the hazel-spray,
To hazel yield the myrtle and the bay.

THYRSIS.

The fir, the hills; the ash adorns the woods;
The pine, the gardens; and the poplar, floods.
If thou, my Lycidas, wilt deign to come,
And cheer thy shepherd's solitary home,
The ash so fair in woods, and garden-pine
Will own their beauty far excel'd by thine.

MELIBŒUS.

So sung the swains, but Thyrsis strove in vain;
Thus far I bear in mind th' alternate strain.
Young Corydon acquir'd unrival'd fame,
And still we pay a deference to his name.

PASTORAL VIII.*

DAMON, ALPHESIBŒUS.

REHEARSE we, Pollio, the enchanting strains
Alternate sung by two contending swains.
Charm'd by their songs, the hungry heifers stood
In deep amaze, unmindful of their food;
The listening lynxes laid their rage aside,
The streams were silent, and forgot to glide.
O thou, where'er thou lead'st thy conquering host,
Or by Timavus,† or th' Illyrian coast!
When shall my Muse, transported with the theme,
In strains sublime my Pollio's deeds proclaim;
And celebrate thy lays by all admir'd,
Such as of old Sophocles' Muse inspir'd?
To thee, the patron of my rural songs,
To thee my first, my latest lay belongs.
Then let this humble ivy-wreath enclose,
Twin'd with triumphal bays, thy godlike brows.

* In this eighth pastoral no particular scene is described. The poet rehearses the songs of two contending swains, Damon and Alphesibœus. The former adopts the soliloquy of a despairing lover: the latter chooses for his subject the magic rites of an enchantress forsaken by her lover, and recalling him by the power of her spells.

† A river in Italy.

What time the chill sky brightens with the dawn,
When cattle love to crop the dewy lawn,
Thus Damon to the woodlands wild complain'd,
As 'gainst an olive's lofty trunk he lean'd.

DAMON.

Lead on the genial day, O star of morn!
While wretched I, all hopeless and forlorn,
With my last breath my fatal woes deplore,
And call the gods by whom false Nisa swore;
Though they, regardless of a lover's pain,
Heard her repeated vows, and heard in vain.
Begin, my pipe, the sweet Mænalian strain.*
Blest Mænalus! that hears the pastoral song
Still languishing its tuneful groves along!
That hears th' Arcadian god's celestial lay,
Who taught the idly-rustling reeds to play!
That hears the singing pines! that hears the swain
Of love's soft chains melodiously complain!
Begin, my pipe, the sweet Mænalian strain.
Mopsus the willing Nisa now enjoys—
What may not lovers hope from such a choice!

* This intercalary line (as it is called by the commentators) which seems to be intended as a chorus or burden to the song, is here made the last of a triplet, that it may be as independent of the context and the verse in the translation as it is in the original.—Mænalus was a mountain of Arcadia.

Now mares and griffins shall their hate resign,
And the succeeding age shall see them join
In friendship's tie; now mutual love shall bring
The dog and doe to share the friendly spring.
Scatter thy nuts, O Mopsus, and prepare
The nuptial torch to light the wedded fair.
Lo, Hesper hastens to the western main!
And thine the night of bliss—thine, happy swain!
Begin, my pipe, the sweet Mænalian strain.

Exult, O Nisa, in thy happy state!
Supremely blest in such a worthy mate;
While you my beard detest, and bushy brow,
And think the gods forget the world below:
While you my flock and rural pipe disdain,
And treat with bitter scorn a faithful swain.
Begin, my pipe, the sweet Mænalian strain.

When first I saw you by your mother's side,
To where our apples grew I was your guide:
Twelve summers since my birth had roll'd around,
And I could reach the branches from the ground.
How did I gaze!—how perish!—ah how vain
The fond bewitching hopes that sooth'd my pain!
Begin, my pipe, the sweet Mænalian strain.

Too well I know thee, Love. From Scythian snows,
Or Lybia's burning sands the mischief rose.
Rocks adamantine nurs'd this foreign bane,
This fell invader of the peaceful plain.
Begin, my pipe, the sweet Mænalian strain.

Love taught the mother's* murdering hand to kill,
Her children's blood love bade the mother spill.
Was love the cruel cause?† Or did the deed
From fierce unfeeling cruelty proceed?
Both fill'd her brutal bosom with their bane;
Both urg'd the deed, while Nature shrunk in vain.
Begin, my pipe, the sweet Mænalian strain.
Now let the fearful lamb the wolf devour;
Let alders blossom with Narcissus' flower;
From barren shrubs let radiant amber flow;
Let rugged oaks with golden fruitage glow;
Let shrieking owls with swans melodious vie;
Let Tityrus the Thracian numbers try,
Outrival Orpheus in the sylvan reign,
And emulate Arion on the main.
Begin, my pipe, the sweet Mænalian strain.
Let land no more the swelling waves divide;
Earth, be thou whelm'd beneath the boundless tide;
Headlong from yonder promontory's brow
I plunge into the rolling deep below.
Farewel, ye woods! farewel, thou flowery plain!
Hear the last lay of a despairing swain.
And cease, my pipe, the sweet Mænalian strain.

* Medea.

† This seems to be Virgil's meaning. The translator did not choose to preserve the conceit on the words *puer* and *mater* in his version; as this (in his opinion) would have rendered the passage obscure and unpleasing to an English reader.

Here Damon ceas'd. And now, ye tuneful Nine,
Alphesibœus' magic verse subjoin,
To his responsive song your aid we call,
Our power extends not equally to all.

ALPHESIBŒUS.

Bring living waters from the silver stream,
With vervain and fat incense feed the flame:
With this soft wreath the sacred altars bind,
To move my cruel Daphnis to be kind,
And with my phrenzy to inflame his soul;
Charms are but wanting to complete the whole.
Bring Daphnis home, bring Daphnis to my arms,
O bring my long-lost love, my powerful charms.

By powerful charms what prodigies are done!
Charms draw pale Cynthia from her silver throne;
Charms burst the bloated snake, and Circe's* guests
By mighty magic charms were changed to beasts.
Bring Daphnis home, bring Daphnis to my arms,
O bring my long-lost love, my powerful charms.

Three woollen wreathes, and each of triple dye,
Three times about thy image I apply,
Then thrice I bear it round the sacred shrine;
Uneven numbers please the powers divine.
Bring Daphnis home, bring Daphnis to my arms,
O bring my long-lost love, my powerful charms.

* See Hom. Odyss. Lib. X.

Haste, let three colours with three knots be join'd,
And say, "Thy fetters, Venus, thus I bind."
Bring Daphnis home, bring Daphnis to my arms,
O bring my long-lost love, my powerful charms.
As this soft clay is harden'd by the flame,
And as this wax is soften'd by the same,
My love, that harden'd Daphnis to disdain,
Shall soften his relenting heart again.
Scatter the salted corn, and place the bays,
And with fat brimstone light the sacred blaze.
Daphnis my burning passion slights with scorn,
And Daphnis in this blazing bay I burn.
Bring Daphnis home, bring Daphnis to my arms,
O bring my long-lost love, my powerful charms.
As when, to find her love, an heifer roams
Through trackless groves, and solitary glooms;
Sick with desire, abandon'd to her woes,
By some lone stream her languid limbs she throws;
There in deep anguish wastes the tedious night,
Nor thoughts of home her late return invite:
Thus may he love, and thus indulge his pain,
While I enhance his torments with disdain.
Bring Daphnis home, bring Daphnis to my arms,
O bring my long-lost love, my powerful charms.
These robes beneath the threshold here I leave,
These pledges of his love, O Earth, receive.
Ye dear memorials of our mutual fire,
Of you my faithless Daphnis I require.

Bring Daphnis home, bring Daphnis to my arms,
O bring my long-lost love, my powerful charms.
These deadly poisons, and these magic weeds,
Selected from the store which Pontus breeds,
Sage Mœris gave me; oft I saw him prove
Their sovereign power; by these, along the grove
A prowling wolf the dread magician roams;
Now gliding ghosts from the profoundest tombs
Inspired he calls; the rooted corn he wings,
And to strange fields the flying harvest brings.
Bring Daphnis home, bring Daphnis to my arms,
O bring my long-lost love, my powerful charms.
These ashes from the altar take with speed,
And treading backwards cast them o'er your head
Into the running stream, nor turn your eye.
Yet this last spell, though hopeless, let me try.
But nought can move the unrelenting swain,
And spells, and magic verse, and gods are vain.
Bring Daphnis home, bring Daphnis to my arms,
O bring my long-lost love, my powerful charms.
Lo, while I linger, with spontaneous fire
The ashes redden, and the flames aspire!
May this new prodigy auspicious prove!
What fearful hopes my beating bosom move!
Hark! does not Hylax bark!—ye powers supreme,
Can it be real, or do lovers dream!—
He comes, my Daphnis comes! forbear my charms;
My love, my Daphnis flies to bless my longing arms.

PASTORAL IX.*

LYCIDAS, MŒRIS.

LYCIDAS.

Go you to town, my friend? this beaten way
Conducts us thither.

MŒRIS.

Ah! the fatal day
The unexpected day at last is come,
When a rude alien drives us from our home.
Hence, hence, ye clowns, th' usurper thus commands,
To me you must resign your ancient lands.
Thus helpless and forlorn we yield to fate;
And our rapacious lord to mitigate

* This and the first eclogue seem to have been written on the same occasion. The time is a still evening. The landscape is described at the 97th line of this translation. On one side of the highway is an artificial arbour, where Lycidas invites Mœris to rest a little from the fatigue of his journey: and at a considerable distance appears a sepulchre by the way-side, where the ancient sepulchres were commonly erected.

The critics with one voice seem to condemn this eclogue as unworthy of its author; I know not for what good reason. The many beautiful lines scattered through it would, one might think, be no weak recommendation. But it is by no means to be reckoned

This brace of kids a present I design,
Which load with curses, O ye powers divine!

LYCIDAS.

'Twas said, Menalcas with his tuneful strains
Had sav'd the grounds of all the neighbouring swains,
From where the hill, that terminates the vale,
In easy risings first begins to swell,
Far as the blasted beech that mates the sky,
And the clear stream that gently murmurs by.

MŒRIS.

Such was the voice of fame; but music's charms,
Amid the dreadful clang of warlike arms,
Avail no more, than the Chaonian dove,
When down the sky descends the bird of Jove.
And had not the prophetic raven spoke
His dire presages from the hollow oak,

---

oned a loose collection of incoherent fragments; its principal parts are all strictly connected, and refer to a certain end, and its allusions and images are wholly suited to pastoral life. Its subject, though uncommon, is not improper; for what is more natural, than that two shepherds, when occasionally mentioning the good qualities of their absent friend, particularly his poetical talents, should repeat such fragments of his songs as they recollected.

And often warn'd me to avoid debate,
And with a patient mind submit to fate,
Ne'er had thy Mœris seen this fatal hour,
And that melodious swain had been no more.

LYCIDAS.

What horrid breast such impious thoughts could breed!
What barbarous hand could make Menalcas bleed!
Could every tender Muse in him destroy,
And from the shepherds ravish all their joy!
For who but he the lovely nymphs could sing,
Or paint the vallies with the purple spring?
Who shade the fountains from the glare of day?
Who but Menalcas could compose the lay,
Which, as we journey'd to my love's abode,
I softly sung to cheer the lonely road?
"Tityrus, while I am absent, feed the flock,*
And, having fed, conduct them to the brook,
(The way is short, and I shall soon return)
But shun the he-goat with the butting horn."

* These lines, which Virgil has translated literally from Theocritus, may be supposed to be a fragment of the poem mentioned in the preceding verses; or, what is more likely, to be spoken by Lycidas to his servant; something similar to which may be seen Past. 5. v. 20. of this translation.—The original is here remarkably explicit, even to a degree of affectation. This the translator has endeavoured to imitate.

MŒRIS.

Or who could finish the imperfect lays
Sung by Menalcas to his Varus' praise?
"If fortune yet shall spare the Mantuan swains,
And save from plundering hands our peaceful plains,
Nor doom us sad Cremona's fate to share,
(For ah! a neighbour's woe excites our fear)
Then high as Heaven our Varus' fame shall rise,
The warbling swans shall bear it to the skies."

LYCIDAS.

Go on, dear swain, these pleasing songs pursue;
So may thy bees avoid the bitter yew,
So may rich herds thy fruitful fields adorn,
So may thy cows with strutting dugs return.
Even I with poets have obtain'd a name,
The Muse inspires me with poetic flame;
Th' applauding shepherds to my songs attend,
But I suspect my skill, though they commend.
I dare not hope to please a Cinna's ear,
Or sing what Varus might vouchsafe to hear.
Harsh are the sweetest lays that I can bring,
So screams a goose where swans melodious sing.

MŒRIS.

This I am pondering, if I can rehearse
The lofty numbers of that labour'd verse.

"Come Galatea, leave the rolling seas;
Can rugged rocks and heaving surges please?
Come, taste the pleasures of our sylvan bowers,
Our balmy-breathing gales, and fragrant flowers.
See, how our plains rejoice on every side,
How crystal streams through blooming vallies glide:
O'er the cool grot the whitening poplars bend,
And clasping vines their grateful umbrage lend.
Come, beauteous nymph, forsake the briny wave
Loud on the beach let the wild billows rave."

LYCIDAS.

Or what you sung one evening on the plain—
The air, but not the words, I yet retain.

MŒRIS.

"Why Daphnis, dost thou calculate the skies,
To know when ancient constellations rise?
Lo, Cæsar's star its radiant light displays,
And on the nations sheds propitious rays.
On the glad hills the reddening clusters glow,
And smiling plenty decks the plains below.
Now graff thy pears; the star of Cæsar reigns,
To thy remotest race the fruit remains."
The rest I have forgot, for length of years
Deadens the sense, and memory impairs.

All things in time submit to sad decay;
Oft have we sung whole summer suns away.
These vanish'd joys must Mœris now deplore,
His voice delights, his numbers charm no more;
Him have the wolves beheld, bewitch'd his song,*
Bewitch'd to silence his melodious tongue.
But your desire Menalcas can fulfil,
All these, and more, he sings with matchless skill.

LYCIDAS.

These faint excuses which my Mœris frames
But heighten my desire.—And now the streams
In slumber-soothing murmurs softly flow;
And now the sighing breeze hath ceas'd to blow.
Half of our way is past, for I descry
Bianor's tomb just rising to the eye.†
Here in this leafy arbour ease your toil,
Lay down your kids, and let us sing the while:
We soon shall reach the town; or, lest a storm
Of sudden rain the evening-sky deform,
Be yours to cheer the journey with a song,
Eas'd of your load, which I shall bear along.

* In Italia creditur luporum visus esse noxios; vocemque homini quem priores contemplentur adimere ad præsens.

Plin. N. H. VIII. 22.

† Bianor is said to have founded Mantua.

SERVIUS.

MŒRIS.

No more, my friend; your kind entreaties spare,
And let our journey be our present care;
Let fate restore our absent friend again,
Then gladly I resume the tuneful strain.

PASTORAL X.*

GALLUS.

To my last labour lend thy sacred aid,
O Arethusa: that the cruel maid
With deep remorse may read the mournful song,
For mournful lays to Gallus' love belong.

* The scene of this pastoral is very accurately delineated. We behold the forlorn Gallus stretched along beneath a solitary cliff, his flocks standing round him at some distance. A group of deities and swains encircle him, each of whom is particularly described. On one side we see the shepherds with their crooks; next to them the neatherds, known by the clumsiness of their appearance; and next to these Menalcas with his clothes wet, as just come from beating or gathering winter-mast. On the other side we observe Apollo with his usual insignia; Sylvanus crown'd with flowers, and brandishing in his hand the long lilies and flowering fennel; and last of all Pan, the god of shepherds, known

(What Muse in sympathy will not bestow
Some tender strains to sooth my Gallus' woe?)
So may thy waters pure of briny stain
Traverse the waves of the Sicilian main.
Sing mournful Muse, of Gallus' luckless love,
While the goats browse along the cliffs above.
Nor silent is the waste while we complain,
The woods return the long-resounding strain.
Whither, ye fountain-nymphs, were ye withdrawn,
To what lone woodland, or what devious lawn,
When Gallus' bosom languish'd with the fire
Of hopeless love, and unallay'd desire?
For neither by th' Aonian spring you stray'd,
Nor roam'd Parnassus' heights, nor Pindus' hallow'd shade.
The pines of Mænalus were heard to mourn,
And sounds of woe along the groves were born.
And sympathetic tears the laurel shed,
And humbler shrubs declin'd their drooping head.
All wept his fate, when to despair resign'd
Beneath a desert-cliff he lay reclin'd.

---

known by his ruddy smiling countenance, and the other peculiarities of his form.

Gallus was a Roman of very considerable rank, a poet of no small estimation, and an intimate friend of Virgil. He loved to distraction one Cytheris (here called Lycoris) who slighted him, and followed Antony into Gaul.

Lyceus' rocks were hung with many a tear,
And round the swain his flocks forlorn appear.
Nor scorn, celestial bard, a poet's name;
Renown'd Adonis by the lonely stream
Tended his flock.—As thus he lay along,
The swains and aukward neatherds round him throng.
Wet from the winter-mast Menalcas came.
All ask, what beauty rais'd the fatal flame.
The god of verse vouchsafed to join the rest;
He said, "What phrensy thus torments thy breast?
While she, thy darling, thy Lycoris, scorns
Thy proffer'd love, and for another burns,
With whom o'er winter-wastes she wanders far,
'Midst camps, and clashing arms, and boisterous war."
Sylvanus came with rural garlands crown'd,
And wav'd the lilies long, and flowering fennel round.
Next we beheld the gay Arcadian god;
His smiling cheeks with bright vermilion glow'd.
"For ever wilt thou heave the bursting sigh?
Is love regardful of the weeping eye?
Love is not cloy'd with tears; alas, no more
Than bees luxurious with the balmy flow'r,
Than goats with foliage, than the grassy plain
With silver rills and soft refreshing rain."
Pan spoke; and thus the youth with grief opprest;
"Arcadians, hear, O hear my last request;
O ye, to whom the sweetest lays belong,
O let my sorrows on your hills be sung:

If your soft flutes shall celebrate my woes,
How will my bones in deepest peace repose!
Ah had I been with you a country-swain,
And prun'd the vine, and fed the bleating train;
Had Phyllis, or some other rural fair,
Or black Amyntas been my darling care;
(Beauteous though black; what lovelier flower is seen
Than the dark violet on the painted green?)
These in the bower had yielded all their charms,
And sunk with mutual raptures in my arms:
Phyllis had crown'd my head with garlands gay,
Amyntas sung the pleasing hours away.
Here, O Lycoris, purls the limpid spring,
Bloom all the meads, and all the woodlands sing;
Here let me press thee to my panting breast,
Till youth, and joy, and life itself be past.
Banish'd by love o'er hostile lands I stray,
And mingle in the battle's dread array;
Whilst thou, relentless to my constant flame,
(Ah could I disbelieve the voice of fame!)
Far from thy home, unaided and forlorn,
Far from thy love, thy faithful love, art born,
On the bleak Alps with chilling blasts to pine,
Or wander waste along the frozen Rhine.
Ye icy paths, O spare her tender form!
O spare those heavenly charms, thou wintry storm!
"Hence let me hasten to some desert-grove,
And soothe with songs my long-unanswered love.

I go, in some lone wilderness to suit
Eubœan lays to my Sicilian flute.
Better with beasts of prey to make abode
In the deep cavern, or the darksome wood;
And carve on trees the story of my woe,
Which with the growing bark shall ever grow.
Meanwhile with woodland-nymphs, a lovely throng,
The winding groves of Mænalus along
I roam at large; or chace the foaming boar;
Or with sagacious hounds the wilds explore,
Careless of cold. And now methinks I bound
O'er rocks and cliffs, and hear the woods resound;
And now with beating heart I seem to wing
The Cretan arrow from the Parthian string—
As if I thus my phrensy could forego,
As if love's god could melt at human woe.
Alas! nor nymphs nor heavenly songs delight—
Farewel, ye groves! the groves no more invite.
No pains, no miseries of man can move
The unrelenting deity of love.
To quench your thirst in Hebrus' frozen flood,
To make the Scythian snows your drear abode;
Or feed your flock on Ethiopian plains,
When Sirius' fiery constellation reigns,
(When deep-imbrown'd the languid herbage lies,
And in the elm the vivid verdure dies)
Were all in vain. Love's unresisted sway
Extends to all, and we must love obey."

'Tis done; ye Nine, here ends your poet's strain
In pity sung to soothe his Gallus' pain.
While leaning on a flowery bank I twine
The flexile osiers, and the basket join.
Celestial Nine, your sacred influence bring,
And soothe my Gallus' sorrows while I sing:
Gallus, my much belov'd! for whom I feel
The flame of purest friendship rising still:
So by a brook the verdant alders rise,
When fostering zephyrs fan the vernal skies.

Let us be gone: at eve, the shade annoys
With noxious damps, and hurts the singer's voice;
The juniper breathes bitter vapours round,
That kill the springing corn, and blast the ground.
Homeward, my sated goats, now let us hie;
Lo beamy Hesper gilds the western sky.

THE MINSTREL:

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.

PREFACE.

THE design was, to trace the progress of a poetical genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as a Minstrel, that is, as an itinerant poet and musician;—a character which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable, but sacred.

I have endeavoured to imitate Spenser in the measure of his verse, and in the harmony, simplicity, and variety of his composition. Antique expressions I have avoided; admitting, however, some old words, where they seemed to suit the subject: but I hope none will be found that are now obsolete, or in any degree not intelligible to a reader of English poetry.

To those, who may be disposed to ask, what could induce me to write in so difficult a measure, I can only answer, that it pleases my ear, and seems, from its

gothic structure and original, to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the poem. It admits both simplicity and magnificence of sound and of language, beyond any other stanza that I am acquainted with. It allows the sententiousness of the couplet, as well as the more complex modulation of blank verse. What some critics have remarked, of its uniformity growing at last tiresome to the ear, will be found to hold true, only when the poetry is faulty in other respects.

BOOK I.

Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar?
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war;
Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pined alone,
Then dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown!

And yet the languor of inglorious days,
Not equally oppressive is to all;
Him, who ne'er listen'd to the voice of praise,
The silence of neglect can ne'er appal.

There are, who, deaf to mad Ambition's call,
Would shrink to hear th' obstreperous trump of Fame;
Supremely blest, if to their portion fall
Health, competence, and peace. Nor higher aim
Had he, whose simple tale these artless lines proclaim.

The rolls of fame I will not now explore;
Nor need I here describe, in learned lay,
How forth the Minstrel far'd in days of yore,
Right glad of heart, though homely in array;
His waving locks and beard all hoary grey:
While from his bending shoulder, decent hung
His harp, the sole companion of his way,
Which to the whistling wild responsive rung:
And ever as he went some merry lay he sung.

Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of pride,
That a poor villager inspires my strain;
With thee let Pageantry and Power abide;
The gentle Muses haunt the sylvan reign;
Where through wild groves at eve the lonely swain
Enraptured roams, to gaze on Nature's charms.
They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain,
The parasite their influence never warms,
Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold alarms.

Though richest hues the peacock's plumes adorn,
Yet horrour screams from his discordant throat.

Rise, sons of harmony, and hail the morn,
While warbling larks on russet pinions float:
Or seek at noon the woodland scene remote,
Where the grey linnets carol from the hill.
O let them ne'er, with artificial note,
To please a tyrant, strain the little bill,
But sing what Heaven inspires, and wander where they will.

Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand;
Nor was perfection made for man below.
Yet all her schemes with nicest art are plann'd,
Good counteracting ill, and gladness woe.
With gold and gems if Chilian mountains glow;
If bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise;
There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow;
Here peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
And freedom fires the soul, and sparkles in the eyes.

Then grieve not, thou, to whom th' indulgent Muse
Vouchsafes a portion of celestial fire:
Nor blame the partial Fates, if they refuse
Th' imperial banquet, and the rich attire.
Know thine own worth, and reverence the lyre.
Wilt thou debase the heart which God refin'd?
No; let thy heaven-taught soul to Heaven aspire,
To fancy, freedom, harmony, resign'd;
Ambition's groveling crew for ever left behind.

Canst thou forego the pure ethereal soul
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of Luxury to loll,
Stung with disease, and stupefied with spleen;
Fain to implore the aid of Flattery's screen,
Even from thyself thy loathsome heart to hide,
(The mansion then no more of joy serene),
Where fear, distrust, malevolence, abide,
And impotent desire, and disappointed pride?

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of Heaven,
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?

These charms shall work thy soul's eternal health,
And love, and gentleness, and joy, impart.
But these thou must renounce, if lust of wealth
E'er win it's way to thy corrupted heart:
For ah! it poisons like a scorpion's dart;
Prompting th' ungenerous wish, the selfish scheme,
The stern resolve unmov'd by pity's smart,
The troublous day, and long distressful dream.
Return my roving Muse, resume thy purposed theme.

There lived in Gothic days, as legends tell,
A shepherd-swain, a man of low degree;
Whose sires, perchance, in Fairyland might dwell,
Sicilian groves, or vales of Arcady;
But he, I ween, was of the north countrie;*
A nation fam'd for song, and beauty's charms;
Zealous, yet modest; innocent, though free;
Patient of toil; serene amidst alarms;
Inflexible in faith; invincible in arms.

The shepherd-swain of whom I mention made,
On Scotia's mountains fed his little flock;
The sickle, scythe, or plough, he never sway'd;
An honest heart was almost all his stock;
His drink the living water from the rock:
The milky dams supplied his board, and lent
Their kindly fleece to baffle winter's shock;
And he, though oft with dust and sweat besprent,
Did guide and guard their wanderings, wheresoe'er
they went.

From labour health, from health contentment springs:
Contentment opes the source of every joy.

* There is hardly an ancient ballad, or romance, wherein a Minstrel or a Harper appears, but he is characterized, by way of eminence, to have been "of the north countrie." It is probable, that under this appellation were formerly comprehended all the provinces to the north of the Trent. See Percy's Essay on the English Minstrels.

He envied not, he never thought of, kings;
Nor from those appetites sustain'd annoy,
That chance may frustrate, or indulgence cloy:
Nor Fate his calm and humble hopes beguiled;
He mourned no recreant friend, nor mistress coy,
For on his vows the blameless Phœbe smiled,
And her alone he loved, and loved her from a child.

No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast,
Nor blasted were their wedded days with strife;
Each season look'd delightful as it past,
To the fond husband, and the faithful wife.
Beyond the lowly vale of shepherd life
They never roam'd; secure beneath the storm
Which in Ambition's lofty land is rife,
Where peace and love are canker'd by the worm
Of pride, each bud of joy industrious to deform.

The wight, whose tale these artless lines unfold,
Was all the offspring of this humble pair:
His birth no oracle or seer foretold;
No prodigy appear'd in earth or air,
Nor aught that might a strange event declare.
You guess each circumstance of Edwin's birth;
The parent's transport, and the parent's care;
The gossip's prayer for wealth, and wit, and worth;
And one long summer-day of indolence and mirth.

And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy,
Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye.
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaude, nor toy,
Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy:
Silent when glad; affectionate, though shy;
And now his look was most demurely sad;
And now he laugh'd aloud, yet none knew why.
The neighbours star'd and sigh'd, yet bless'd the lad:
Some deem'd him wondrous wise, and some believed
him mad.

But why should I his childish feats display?
Concourse, and noise, and toil, he ever fled;
Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps; but to the forest sped,
Or roam'd at large the lonely mountain's head,
Or, where the maze of some bewilder'd stream
To deep untrodden groves his footsteps led,
There would he wander wild, till Phœbus' beam,
Shot from the western cliff, releas'd the weary team.

Th' exploit of strength, dexterity, or speed,
To him nor vanity nor joy could bring.
His heart, from cruel sport estranged, would bleed
To work the woe of any living thing,
By trap, or net; by arrow, or by sling;
These he detested; those he scorn'd to wield:
He wish'd to be the guardian, not the king,

Tyrant far less, or traitor of the field.
And sure the sylvan reign unbloody joy might yield.

Lo! where the stripling, wrapt in wonder, roves
Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine;
And sees, on high, amidst th' encircling groves,
From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine:
While waters, woods, and winds, in concert join,
And Echo swells the chorus to the skies.
Would Edwin this majestic scene resign
For aught the huntsman's puny craft supplies?
Ah! no: he better knows great Nature's charms to prize.

And oft he traced the uplands, to survey,
When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn,
The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountain grey,
And lake, dim-gleaming on the smoky lawn:
Far to the west the long long vale withdrawn,
Where twilight loves to linger for a while;
And now he faintly kens the bounding fawn,
And villager abroad at early toil.
But lo! the Sun appears! and heaven, earth, ocean, smile.

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost.
What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,

And view th' enormous waste of vapour, tost
In billows, lengthening to th' horizon round,
Now scoop'd in gulfs, with mountains now emboss'd!
And hear the voice of mirth and song rebound,
Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar profound!

In truth he was a strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle, and each dreadful scene.
In darkness, and in storm, he found delight:
Nor less, than when on ocean-wave serene
The southern Sun diffused his dazzling shene.*
Even sad vicissitude amused his soul:
And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wish'd not to control.

"O ye wild groves, O where is now your bloom!"
(The Muse interprets thus his tender thought)
"Your flowers, your verdure, and your balmy gloom,
Of late so grateful in the hour of drought!
Why do the birds, that song and rapture brought
To all your bowers, their mansions now forsake?
Ah! why has fickle chance this ruin wrought?
For now the storm howls mournful thro' the brake,
And the dead foliage flies in many a shapeless flake.

* Brightness, splendour. The word is used by some late writers, as well as by Milton.

"Where now the rill, melodious, pure, and cool,
And meads, with life, and mirth, and beauty crown'd!
Ah! see, th' unsightly slime, and sluggish pool,
Have all the solitary vale embrown'd;
Fled each fair form, and mute each melting sound,
The raven croaks forlorn on naked spray:
And hark! the river, bursting every mound,
Down the vale thunders, and with wasteful sway
Uproots the grove, and rolls the shattered rocks away.

"Yet such the destiny of all on Earth:
So flourishes and fades majestic Man.
Fair is the bud his vernal morn brings forth,
And fostering gales a while the nursling fan.
O smile, ye Heavens, serene; ye mildews wan,
Ye blighting whirlwinds, spare his balmy prime,
Nor lessen of his life the little span.
Borne on the swift, though silent, wings of Time,
Old age comes on apace to ravage all the clime.

"And be it so. Let those deplore their doom,
Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn:
But lofty souls, who look beyond the tomb,
Can smile at Fate, and wonder how they mourn.
Shall Spring to these sad scenes no more return?
Is yonder wave the Sun's eternal bed?
Soon shall the orient with new lustre burn,

And Spring shall soon her vital influence shed,
Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

"Shall I be left forgotten in the dust,
When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
Shall Nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
Bid him, though doomed to perish, hope to live?
Is it for this fair Virtue oft must strive
With disappointment, penury, and pain?
No: Heaven's immortal springs shall yet arrive,
And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
Bright thro' th' eternal year of Love's triumphant reign."

This truth sublime his simple sire had taught.
In sooth, 'twas almost all the shepherd knew.
No subtile nor superfluous lore he sought,
Nor ever wish'd his Edwin to pursue.
"Let man's own sphere" said he "confine his view,
Be man's peculiar work his sole delight."
And much, and oft, he warn'd him, to eschew
Falsehood and guile, and aye maintain the right,
By pleasure unseduc'd, unaw'd by lawless might.

"And, from the prayer of Want, and plaint of Woe,
O never, never turn away thine ear!
Forlorn, in this bleak wilderness below,
Ah! what were man, should Heaven refuse to hear!
To others do (the law is not severe)

What to thyself thou wishest to be done.
Forgive thy foes; and love thy parents dear,
And friends, and native land; nor those alone;
All human weal and woe learn thou to make thine own."

See, in the rear of the warm sunny shower
The visionary boy from shelter fly;
For now the storm of summer-rain is o'er,
And cool, and fresh, and fragrant is the sky.
And, lo! in the dark east, expanded high,
The rainbow brightens to the setting Sun!
Fond fool, that deem'st the streaming glory nigh,
How vain the chace thine ardour has begun!
'Tis fled afar, ere half thy purpos'd race be run.

Yet couldst thou learn, that thus it fares with age,
When pleasure, wealth, or power, the bosom warm,
This baffled hope might tame thy manhood's rage,
And disappointment of her sting disarm.
But why should foresight thy fond heart alarm?
Perish the lore that deadens young desire;
Pursue, poor imp, th' imaginary charm,
Indulge gay hope, and fancy's pleasing fire:
Fancy and hope too soon shall of themselves expire.

When the long-sounding curfew from afar
Loaded with loud lament the lonely gale,

Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
Lingering and listening, wander'd down the vale.
There would he dream of graves, and corses pale;
And ghosts that to the charnel-dungeon throng,
And drag a length of clanking chain, and wail,
Till silenced by the owl's terrific song,
Or blast that shrieks by fits the shuddering isles along.

Or, when the setting Moon, in crimson dyed,
Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,
To haunted stream, remote from man, he hied,
Where fays of yore their revels wont to keep;
And there let Fancy rove at large, till sleep
A vision brought to his entranced sight.
And first, a wildly murmuring wind 'gan creep
Shrill to his ringing ear; then tapers bright,
With instantaneous gleam, illumed the vault of night.

Anon in view a portal's blazon'd arch
Arose; the trumpet bids the valves unfold;
And forth an host of little warriors march,
Grasping the diamond lance, and targe of gold.
Their look was gentle, their demeanor bold,
And green their helms, and green their silk attire;
And here and there, right venerably old,
The long-rob'd minstrels wake the warbling wire,
And some with mellow breath the martial pipe inspire.

With merriment, and song, and timbrels clear,
A troop of dames from myrtle bowers advance;
The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
And loud enlivening strains provoke the dance.
They meet, they dart away, they wheel askance;
To right, to left, they thrid the flying maze;
Now bound aloft with vigorous spring, then glance
Rapid along: with many-colour'd rays
Of tapers, gems, and gold, the echoing forests blaze.

The dream is fled. Proud harbinger of day,
Who scar'd'st the vision with thy clarion shrill,
Fell chanticleer! who oft hath reft away
My fancied good, and brought substantial ill!
O to thy cursed scream, discordant still,
Let harmony aye shut her gentle ear:
Thy boastful mirth let jealous rivals spill,
Insult thy crest, and glossy pinions tear,
And ever in thy dreams the ruthless fox appear.

Forbear, my Muse. Let Love attune thy line.
Revoke the spell. Thine Edwin frets not so.
For how should he at wicked chance repine,
Who feels from every change amusement flow!
Even now his eyes with smiles of rapture glow,
As on he wanders through the scenes of morn,
Where the fresh flowers in living lustre blow,
Where thousand pearls, the dewy lawns adorn,
A thousand notes of joy in every breeze are borne.

But who the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain side;
The lowing herd; the sheepfold's simple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean-tide;
The hum of bees, the linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

The cottage-curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crown'd with her pail the tripping milkmaid sings;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield; and, hark!
Down the rough slope the ponderous waggon rings;
Through rustling corn the hare astonish'd springs;
Slow tolls the village-clock the drowsy hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequester'd bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aërial tour.

O Nature, how in every charm supreme!
Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new!
O for the voice and fire of seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due!
Blest be the day I 'scap'd the wrangling crew,
From Pyrrho's maze, and Epicurus' sty;
And held high converse with the godlike few,
Who to th' enraptur'd heart, and ear, and eye,
Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and melody.

Hence! ye, who snare and stupefy the mind,
Sophists, of beauty, virtue, joy, the bane!
Greedy and fell, though impotent and blind,
Who spread your filthy nets in Truth's fair fane,
And ever ply your venom'd fangs amain!
Hence to dark Error's den, whose rankling slime
First gave you form! Hence! lest the Muse should deign,
(Though loth on theme so mean to waste a rhyme),
With vengeance to pursue your sacrilegious crime.

But hail, ye mighty masters of the lay,
Nature's true sons, the friends of man and truth!
Whose song, sublimely sweet, serenely gay,
Amus'd my childhood, and inform'd my youth.
O let your spirit still my bosom soothe,
Inspire my dreams, and my wild wanderings guide:
Your voice each rugged path of life can smoothe,
For well I know where-ever ye reside,
There harmony, and peace, and innocence abide.

Ah me! neglected on the lonesome plain,
As yet poor Edwin never knew your lore,
Save when against the winter's drenching rain,
And driving snow, the cottage shut the door.
Then, as instructed by tradition hoar,
Her legend when the beldame 'gan impart,
Or chant the old heroic ditty o'er,

Wonder and joy ran thrilling to his heart;
Much he the tale admir'd, but more the tuneful art.

Various and strange was the long-winded tale;
And halls, and knights, and feats of arms display'd;
Or merry swains, who quaff the nut-brown ale,
And sing enamour'd of the nut-brown maid;
The moon-light revel of the fairy glade;
Or hags, that suckle an infernal brood,
And ply in caves th' unutterable trade,*
'Midst fiends and spectres, quench the Moon in blood,
Yell in the midnight storm, or ride th' infuriate flood.

But when to horrour his amazement rose,
A gentler strain the beldame would rehearse,
A tale of rural life, a tale of woes,
The orphan-babes, and guardian uncle fierce.
O cruel! will no pang of pity pierce
That heart, by lust of lucre sear'd to stone?
For sure, if aught of virtue last, or verse,
To latest times shall tender souls bemoan
Those hopeless orphan-babes by thy fell arts undone.

* Allusion to Shakespeare.

Macbeth. How now, ye secret, black, and midnight hags,
What is 't ye do?

Witches. A deed without a name.

Macbeth, Act 4. Scene 1.

Behold, with berries smear'd, with brambles torn,*
The babes now famish'd lay them down to die:
Amidst the howl of darksome woods forlorn,
Folded in one another's arms they lie;
Nor friend, nor stranger, hears their dying cry:
"For from the town the man returns no more."
But thou, who Heaven's just vengeance dar'st defy,
This deed with fruitless tears shalt soon deplore,
When Death lays waste thy house, and flames consume
thy store.

A stifled smile of stern vindictive joy
Brighten'd one moment Edwin's starting tear,
"But why should gold man's feeble mind decoy,
And innocence thus die by doom severe?"
O Edwin! while thy heart is yet sincere,
Th' assaults of discontent and doubt repel:
Dark even at noontide is our mortal sphere;
But let us hope; to doubt is to rebel;
Let us exult in hope, that all shall yet be well.

Nor be thy generous indignation check'd,
Nor check'd the tender tear to Misery given;
From Guilt's contagious power shall that protect,
This soften and refine the soul for Heaven.
But dreadful is their doom, whom doubt has driven

* See the fine old ballad called, The Children in the Wood.

To censure Fate, and pious Hope forego:
Like yonder blasted boughs by lightning riven,
Perfection, beauty, life, they never know,
But frown on all that pass, a monument of woe.

Shall he, whose birth, maturity, and age,
Scarce fill the circle of one summer day,
Shall the poor gnat, with discontent and rage
Exclaim that Nature hastens to decay,
If but a cloud obstruct the solar ray,
If but a momentary shower descend!
Or shall frail man Heaven's dread decree gainsay,
Which bade the series of events extend
Wide thro' unnumber'd worlds, and ages without end!

One part, one little part, we dimly scan
Thro' the dark medium of life's feverish dream;
Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
If but that little part incongruous seem.
Nor is that part perhaps what mortals deem;
Oft from apparent ill our blessings rise.
O then renounce that impious self-esteem,
That aims to trace the secrets of the skies:
For thou art but of dust; be humble, and be wise.

Thus Heaven enlarg'd his soul in riper years.
For Nature gave him strength, and fire, to soar

On Fancy's wing above this vale of tears;
Where dark cold-hearted sceptics, creeping, pore
Through microscope of metaphysic lore:
And much they grope for Truth, but never hit.
For why? Their powers, inadequate before,
This idle art makes more and more unfit;
Yet deem they darkness light, and their vain blunders wit.

Nor was this ancient dame a foe to mirth.
Her ballad, jest, and riddle's quaint device
Oft cheer'd the shepherds round their social hearth;
Whom levity or spleen could ne'er entice
To purchase chat, or laughter, at the price
Of decency. Nor let it faith exceed,
That Nature forms a rustic taste so nice.
Ah! had they been of court or city breed,
Such delicacy were right marvellous indeed.

Oft when the winter storm had ceas'd to rave,
He roam'd the snowy waste at even, to view
The cloud stupendous, from th' Atlantic wave
High-towering, sail along th' horizon blue:
Where, 'midst the changeful scenery, ever new,
Fancy a thousand wondrous forms descries,
More wildly great than ever pencil drew,
Rocks, torrents, gulfs, and shapes of giant size,
And glitt'ring cliffs on cliffs, and fiery ramparts rise.

Thence musing onward to the sounding shore,
The lone enthusiast oft would take his way,
Listening, with pleasing dread, to the deep roar
Of the wide-weltering waves. In black array
When sulphurous clouds roll'd on th' autumnal day,
Even then he hasten'd from the haunt of man,
Along the trembling wilderness to stray,
What time the lightning's fierce career began,
And o'er Heav'n's rending arch the rattling thunder ran.

Responsive to the sprightly pipe, when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were join'd,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclin'd,
Sooth'd with the soft notes warbling in the wind,
Ah then, all jollity seem'd noise and folly,
To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refin'd,
Ah, what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
When with the charm compar'd of heavenly melancholy!

Is there a heart that music cannot melt?
Alas! how is that rugged heart forlorn;
Is there, who ne'er those mystic transports felt
Of solitude and melancholy born?
He needs not woo the Muse; he is her scorn.

F. Burney del. J. Neagle sculp.

Responsive to the sprightly pipe when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were join'd,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclin'd.

Minstrel B. I. v. 55.

Published June 1st 1801, by J. Mawman, London.

The sophist's rope of cobweb he shall twine;
Mope o'er the schoolman's peevish page; or mourn,
And delve for life in Mammon's dirty mine;
Sneak with the scoundrel fox, or grunt with glutton swine.

For Edwin, Fate a nobler doom had plann'd;
Song was his favourite and first pursuit.
The wild harp rang to his advent'rous hand,
And languish'd to his breath the plaintive flute.
His infant Muse, though artless, was not mute:
Of elegance as yet he took no care;
For this of time and culture is the fruit;
And Edwin gain'd at last this fruit so rare:
As in some future verse I purpose to declare.

Meanwhile, whate'er of beautiful, or new,
Sublime, or dreadful, in earth, sea, or sky,
By chance, or search, was offer'd to his view,
He scan'd with curious and romantic eye.
Whate'er of lore tradition could supply
From gothic tale, or song, or fable old,
Rous'd him, still keen to listen and to pry.
At last, though long by penury control'd,
And solitude, her soul his graces 'gan unfold.

Thus on the chill Lapponian's dreary land,
For many a long month lost in snow profound,

When Sol from Cancer sends the season bland,
And in their northern cave the storms are bound;
From silent mountains, straight, with startling sound,
Torrents are hurl'd; green hills emerge; and lo,
The trees with foliage, cliffs with flowers are crown'd;
Pure rills through vales of verdure warbling go;
And wonder, love, and joy, the peasant's heart o'erflow.*

Here pause, my gothic lyre, a little while.
The leisure hour is all that thou canst claim.
But on this verse if Montague should smile,
New strains ere long shall animate thy frame.
And her applause to me is more than fame;
For still with truth accords her taste refin'd.
At lucre or renown let others aim,
I only wish to please the gentle mind,
Whom Nature's charms inspire, and love of humankind.

* Spring and Autumn are hardly known to the Laplanders. About the time the sun enters Cancer, their fields, which a week before were covered with snow, appear on a sudden full of grass and flowers.

Scheffer's History of Lapland, p. 16.

THE MINSTREL:

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.

BOOK II.

Of chance or change O let not man complain,
Else shall he never never cease to wail;
For, from the imperial dome, to where the swain
Rears the lone cottage in the silent dale,
All feel th' assault of Fortune's fickle gale;
Art, empire, Earth itself, to change are doom'd;
Earthquakes have rais'd to Heaven the humble vale,
And gulphs the mountain's mighty mass entomb'd;
And where th' Atlantic rolls wide continents have bloom'd.*

But sure to foreign climes we need not range,
Nor search the ancient records of our race,
To learn the dire effects of time and change,
Which in ourselves, alas! we daily trace.

* See Plato's Timeus.

Yet at the darken'd eye, the wither'd face,
Or hoary hair, I never will repine:
But spare, O Time, whate'er of mental grace,
Of candour, love, or sympathy divine,
Whate'er of fancy's ray, or friendship's flame is mine.

So I, obsequious to Truth's dread command,
Shall here without reluctance change my lay,
And smite the gothic lyre with harsher hand;
Now when I leave that flowery path for aye,
Of childhood, where I sported many a day,
Warbling and sauntering carelessly along;
Where every face was innocent and gay,
Each vale romantic, tuneful every tongue,
Sweet, wild, and artless all, as Edwin's infant song.

"Perish the lore that deadens young desire,"
Is the soft tenor of my song no more.
Edwin, tho' lov'd of Heaven, must not aspire
To bliss, which mortals never knew before.
On trembling wings let youthful fancy soar,
Nor always haunt the sunny realms of joy:
But now and then the shades of life explore;
Tho' many a sound and sight of woe annoy,
And many a qualm of care his rising hopes destroy.

Vigour from toil, from trouble patience grows.
The weakly blossom, warm in summer bower,

Some tints of transient beauty may disclose;
But soon it withers in the chilling hour.
Mark yonder oaks! Superior to the power
Of all the warring winds of Heaven they rise,
And from the stormy promontory tower,
And toss their giant arms amid the skies,
While each assailing blast increase of strength supplies.

And now the downy cheek and deepen'd voice
Gave dignity to Edwin's blooming prime;
And walks of wider circuit were his choice,
And vales more mild, and mountains more sublime.
One evening, as he fram'd the careless rhyme,
It was his chance to wander far abroad,
And o'er a lonely eminence to climb,
Which heretofore his foot had never trode;
A vale appear'd below, a deep retired abode.

Thither he hied, enamour'd of the scene.
For rocks on rocks pil'd, as by magic spell,
Here scorch'd with lightning, there with ivy green,
Fenc'd from the north and east this savage dell.
Southward a mountain rose with easy swell,
Whose long long groves eternal murmur made:
And toward the western sun a streamlet fell,
Where, thro' the cliffs, the eye, remote, survey'd
Blue hills, and glittering waves, and skies in gold array'd.

Along this narrow valley you might see
The wild deer sporting on the meadow ground,
And, here and there, a solitary tree,
Or mossy stone, or rock with woodbine crown'd.
Oft did the cliffs reverberate the sound
Of parted fragments tumbling from on high;
And from the summit of that craggy mound
The perching eagle oft was heard to cry,
Or on resounding wings, to shoot athwart the sky.

One cultivated spot there was, that spread
Its flowery bosom to the noonday beam,
Where many a rose-bud rears its blushing head,
And herbs for food with future plenty teem.
Sooth'd by the lulling sound of grove and stream,
Romantic visions swarm on Edwin's soul:
He minded not the Sun's last trembling gleam,
Nor heard from far the twilight curfew toll;
When slowly on his ear these moving accents stole.

"Hail, awful scenes, that calm the troubled breast,
And woo the weary to profound repose!
Can passion's wildest uproar lay to rest,
And whisper comfort to the man of woes!
Here Innocence may wander, safe from foes,
And Contemplation soar on seraph wings.
O solitude! the man who thee foregoes,

When lucre lures him, or ambition stings,
Shall never know the source whence real grandeur springs.

" Vain man! is grandeur giv'n to gay attire?
Then let the butterfly thy pride upbraid:
To friends, attendants, armies, bought with hire?
It is thy weakness that requires their aid:
To palaces, with gold and gems inlay'd?
They fear the thief, and tremble in the storm:
To hosts, thro' carnage who to conquest wade?
Behold the victor vanquish'd by the worm!
Behold, what deeds of woe the locust can perform!

" True dignity is his, whose tranquil mind
Virtue has rais'd above the things below;
Who, every hope and fear to Heaven resign'd,
Shrinks not, tho' Fortune aim her deadliest blow."
This strain from 'midst the rocks was heard to flow,
In solemn sounds. Now beam'd the evening star;
And from embattled clouds emerging slow
Cynthia came riding on her silver car;
And hoary mountain-cliffs shone faintly from afar.

Soon did the solemn voice its theme renew:
(While Edwin wrapt in wonder listening stood)
" Ye tools and toys of tyranny, adieu,
Scorn'd by the wise and hated by the good!

Ye only can engage the servile brood
Of Levity and Lust, who all their days,
Asham'd of truth and liberty, have woo'd,
And hugg'd the chain, that, glittering on their gaze,
Seems to outshine the pomp of Heaven's empyreal blaze.

"Like them, abandon'd to Ambition's sway,
I sought for glory in the paths of guile;
And fawn'd and smil'd, to plunder and betray,
Myself betray'd and plunder'd all the while;
So gnaw'd the viper the corroding file;
But now, with pangs of keen remorse, I rue
Those years of trouble and debasement vile.
Yet why should I this cruel theme pursue!
Fly, fly, detested thoughts, for ever from my view!

"The gusts of appetite, the clouds of care,
And storms of disappointment, all o'erpast,
Henceforth no earthly hope with Heaven shall share
This heart, where peace serenely shines at last.
And if for me no treasure be amass'd,
And if no future age shall hear my name,
I lurk the more secure from fortune's blast,
And with more leisure feed this pious flame,
Whose rapture far transcends the fairest hopes of fame.

"The end and the reward of toil is rest,
Be all my prayer for virtue and for peace.

E. F. Burney del. J. Heath sculp.

And thither let the village swain repair;
And, light of heart, the village maiden gay,
To deck with flowers her half-dishevel'd hair,
And celebrate the merry morn of May.

Minstrel. Book 2. ver. XVIII.

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Of wealth and fame, of pomp and power possess'd,
Who ever felt his weight of woe decrease?
Ah! what avails the lore of Rome and Greece,
The lay heaven-prompted, and harmonious string,
The dust of Ophir, or the Tyrian fleece,
All that art, fortune, enterprise, can bring,
If envy, scorn, remorse, or pride the bosom wring!

"Let Vanity adorn the marble tomb
With trophies, rhymes, and scutcheons of renown,
In the deep dungeon of some gothic dome,
Where night and desolation ever frown.
Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down;
Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
With here and there a violet bestrown,
Fast by a brook, or fountain's murmuring wave;
And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my grave.

"And thither let the village swain repair;
And, light of heart, the village maiden gay,
To deck with flowers her half-dishevell'd hair,
And celebrate the merry morn of May.
There let the shepherd's pipe the live-long day
Fill all the grove with love's bewitching woe;
And when mild Evening comes in mantle gray,
Let not the blooming band make haste to go;
No ghost, nor spell, my long and last abode shall know.

" For though I fly to 'scape from Fortune's rage,
And bear the scars of envy, spite, and scorn,
Yet with mankind no horrid war I wage,
Yet with no impious spleen my breast is torn:
For virtue lost, and ruin'd man, I mourn.
O man! creation's pride, Heaven's darling child,
Whom Nature's best, divinest gifts adorn,
Why from thy home are truth and joy exil'd,
And all thy favourite haunts with blood and tears defil'd?

" Along yon glittering sky what glory streams!
What majesty attends Night's lovely queen!
Fair laugh our vallies in the vernal beams;
And mountains rise, and oceans roll between,
And all conspire to beautify the scene.
But, in the mental world, what chaos drear;
What forms of mournful, loathsome, furious mien!
O when shall that eternal morn appear,
These dreadful forms to chase, this chaos dark to clear!

" O Thou, at whose creative smile, yon heaven,
In all the pomp of beauty, life, and light,
Rose from th' abyss; when dark Confusion driven
Down, down the bottomless profound of night,
Fled, where he ever flies thy piercing sight!

O glance on these sad shades one pitying ray,
To blast the fury of oppressive might,
Melt the hard heart to love and mercy's sway,
And cheer the wandering soul, and light him on the way!"

Silence ensu'd: and Edwin raised his eyes
In tears, for grief lay heavy at his heart.
"And is it thus in courtly life," he cries,
"That man to man acts a betrayer's part?
And dares he thus the gifts of Heaven pervert,
Each social instinct, and sublime desire?
Hail Poverty! if honour, wealth, and art,
If what the great pursue, and learn'd admire,
Thus dissipate and quench the soul's ethereal fire!"

He said, and turn'd away; nor did the sage
O'erhear, in silent orisons employ'd.
The youth, his rising sorrow to assuage,
Home as he hied, the evening scene enjoy'd:
For now no cloud obscures the starry void;
The yellow moonlight sleeps on all the hills;*
Nor is the mind with startling sounds annoy'd;
A soothing murmur the lone region fills,
Of groves, and dying gales, and melancholy rills.

* How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank.
Shakespeare.

But he from day to day more anxious grew,
The voice still seem'd to vibrate on his ear.
Nor durst he hope the hermit's tale untrue;
For man he seem'd to love, and Heaven to fear;
And none speaks false, where there is none to hear.
"Yet, can man's gentle heart become so fell!
No more in vain conjecture let me wear
My hours away, but seek the hermit's cell;
'Tis he my doubt can clear, perhaps my care dispel."

At early dawn the youth his journey took,
And many a mountain pass'd and valley wide,
Then reach'd the wild; where, in a flowery nook,
And seated on a mossy stone, he spied
An ancient man: his harp lay him beside.
A stag sprang from the pasture at his call,
And, kneeling, lick'd the wither'd hand that tied
A wreath of woodbine round his antlers tall,
And hung his lofty neck with many a flow'ret small.

And now the hoary sage arose, and saw
The wanderer approaching: innocence
Smil'd on his glowing cheek, but modest awe
Depress'd his eye, that fear'd to give offence.
"Who art thou, courteous stranger? and from whence?
Why roam thy steps to this sequester'd dale?"
"A shepherd-boy," the youth replied, "far hence

P. 202

E. F. Burney del. J. Fittler sculp.

And, kneeling, lick'd the wither'd hand, that tied
A wreathe of woodbine round his antlers tall.

Minstrel Book 2. ver. XXV.

Published June 1st 1801, by J. Mawman, London.

My habitation; hear my artless tale;
Nor levity nor falsehood shall thine ear assail.

"Late as I roam'd, intent on Nature's charms,
I reach'd at eve this wilderness profound;
And, leaning where yon oak expands her arms,
Heard these rude cliffs thine awful voice rebound,
(For in thy speech I recognise the sound.)
You mourn'd for ruin'd man, and virtue lost,
And seem'd to feel of keen remorse the wound,
Pondering on former days by guilt engross'd,
Or in the giddy storm of dissipation toss'd.

"But say, in courtly life can craft be learn'd,
Where knowledge opens, and exalts the soul?
Where Fortune lavishes her gifts unearn'd,
Can selfishness the liberal heart control?
Is glory there achiev'd by arts, as foul
As those that felons, fiends, and furies plan?
Spiders ensnare, snakes poison, tygers prowl:
Love is the godlike attribute of man.
O teach a simple youth this mystery to scan.

"Or else the lamentable strain disclaim,
And give me back the calm, contented mind;
Which, late, exulting, view'd in Nature's frame,
Goodness untainted, wisdom unconfin'd,
Grace, grandeur, and utility combin'd.

Restore those tranquil days, that saw me still
Well pleas'd with all, but most with human kind:
When Fancy roam'd thro' Nature's works at will,
Uncheck'd by cold distrust, and uninform'd of ill."

"Wouldst thou," the sage replied, "in peace return
To the gay dreams of fond romantic youth,
Leave me to hide, in this remote sojourn,
From every gentle ear the dreadful truth:
For if my desultory strain with ruth
And indignation make thine eyes o'erflow,
Alas! what comfort could thy anguish sooth,
Shouldst thou th' extent of human folly know.
Be ignorance thy choice, where knowledge leads to woe.

"But let untender thoughts afar be driven;
Nor venture to arraign the dread decree.
For know, to man, as candidate for heaven,
The voice of the Eternal said, Be free:
And this divine prerogative to thee
Does virtue, happiness, and Heaven convey;
For virtue is the child of liberty,
And happiness of virtue; nor can they
Be free to keep the path, who are not free to stray.

"Yet leave me not. I would allay that grief,
Which else might thy young virtue over-power,

And in thy converse I shall find relief,
When the dark shades of melancholy lower;
For solitude has many a dreary hour,
Even when exempt from grief, remorse, and pain:
Come often then; for, haply, in my bower,
Amusement, knowledge, wisdom thou may'st gain:
If I one soul improve, I have not liv'd in vain."

And now, at length, to Edwin's ardent gaze
The Muse of history unrols her page.
But few, alas! the scenes her art displays,
To charm his fancy, or his heart engage.
Here chiefs their thirst of power in blood asswage,
And straight their flames with tenfold fierceness burn:
Here smiling Virtue prompts the patriot's rage,
But lo, ere long, is left alone to mourn,
And languish in the dust, and clasp th' abandon'd urn!

"Ambition's slippery verge shall mortals tread,
Where ruin's gulph unfathom'd yawns beneath!
Shall life, shall liberty be lost," he said,
"For the vain toys that pomp and power bequeath!
The car of victory, the plume, the wreath,
Defend not from the bolt of fate the brave:
No note the clarion of renown can breathe,
T' alarm the long night of the lonely grave,
Or check the headlong haste of time's o'erwhelming wave.

" Ah, what avails it to have trac'd the springs,
That whirl of empire the stupendous wheel!
Ah, what have I to do with conquering kings,
Hands drench'd in blood, and breasts begirt with steel!
To those, whom Nature taught to think and feel,
Heroes, alas! are things of small concern;
Could History man's secret heart reveal,
And what imports a heaven-born mind to learn,
Her transcripts to explore what bosom would not yearn!

" This praise, O Cheronean sage,* is thine!
(Why should this praise to thee alone belong?)
All else from Nature's moral path decline,
Lur'd by the toys that captivate the throng;
To herd in cabinets and camps, among
Spoil, carnage, and the cruel pomp of pride;
Or chant of heraldry the drowsy song,
How tyrant blood, o'er many a region wide,
Rolls to a thousand thrones its execrable tide.

" O who of man the story will unfold,
Ere victory and empire wrought annoy,
In that elysian age (misnam'd of gold)
The age of love, and innocence, and joy,
When all were great and free! man's sole employ
To deck the bosom of his parent earth;

* Plutarch.

Or toward his bower the murmuring stream decoy,
To aid the flow'ret's long-expected birth,
And lull the bed of peace, and crown the board of mirth.

" Sweet were your shades, O ye primeval groves!
Whose boughs to man his food and shelter lent,
Pure in his pleasures, happy in his loves,
His eye still smiling, and his heart content.
Then, hand in hand, health, sport, and labour went.
Nature supply'd the wish she taught to crave.
None prowl'd for prey, none watch'd to circumvent.
To all an equal lot Heaven's bounty gave:
No vassal fear'd his lord, no tyrant fear'd his slave.

But ah! th' historic Muse has never dar'd
To pierce those hallow'd bowers: 'tis Fancy's beam
Pour'd on the vision of th' enraptur'd bard,
That paints the charms of that delicious theme.
Then hail sweet Fancy's ray! and hail the dream
That weans the weary soul from guilt and woe!
Careless what others of my choice may deem,
I long, where Love and Fancy lead, to go
And meditate on Heaven, enough of Earth I know."

" I cannot blame thy choice," the sage replied,
" For soft and smooth are Fancy's flowery ways.

And yet, even there, if left without a guide,
The young adventurer unsafely plays.
Eyes dazzl'd long by fiction's gaudy rays
In modest truth no light nor beauty find.
And who, my child, would trust the meteor-blaze,
That soon must fail, and leave the wanderer blind,
More dark and helpless far, than if it ne'er had shin'd?

"Fancy enervates, while it sooths, the heart,
And, while it dazzles, wounds the mental sight:
To joy each heightening charm it can impart,
But wraps the hour of woe in tenfold night.
And often, where no real ills affright,
Its visionary fiends, an endless train,
Assail with equal or superior might,
And thro' the throbbing heart, and dizzy brain,
And shivering nerves, shoot stings of more than mortal pain.

"And yet, alas! the real ills of life
Claim the full vigour of a mind prepar'd,
Prepar'd for patient, long, laborious strife,
Its guide experience, and truth its guard.
We fare on Earth as other men have far'd.
Were they successful? Let not us despair.
Was disappointment oft their sole reward?

Yet shall their tale instruct, if it declare,
How they have borne the load ourselves are doom'd to bear.

What charms th' historic Muse adorn, from spoils,
And blood, and tyrants, when she wings her flight,
To hail the patriot prince, whose pious toils
Sacred to science, liberty, and right,
And peace, through every age divinely bright
Shall shine the boast and wonder of mankind!
Sees yonder Sun, from his meridian height,
A lovelier scene, than virtue thus enshrin'd
In power, and man with man for mutual aid combin'd?

" Hail sacred Polity, by Freedom rear'd!
Hail sacred Freedom, when by law restrain'd!
Without you what were man? A groveling herd,
In darkness, wretchedness, and want enchain'd.
Sublim'd by you, the Greek and Roman reign'd
In arts unrivall'd: O, to latest days,
In Albion may your influence unprofan'd
To godlike worth the generous bosom raise,
And prompt the sage's lore, and fire the poet's lays!

" But now let other themes our care engage.
For lo, with modest yet majestic grace,
To curb Imagination's lawless rage,
And from within the cherish'd heart to brace,

Philosophy appears! The gloomy race
By Indolence and moping Fancy bred,
Fear, Discontent, Solicitude, give place,
And Hope and Courage brighten in their stead,
While on the kindling soul her vital beams are shed.

"Then waken from long lethargy to life*
The seeds of happiness, and powers of thought;
Then jarring appetites forego their strife,
A strife by ignorance to madness wrought.
Pleasure by savage man is dearly bought
With fell revenge, lust that defies controul,
With gluttony and death. The mind untaught
Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempests howl;
As Phœbus to the world, is science to the soul.

"And reason now thro' number, time, and space,
Darts the keen lustre of her serious eye.
And learns, from facts compar'd, the laws to trace,
Whose long progression leads to Deity.
Can mortal strength presume to soar so high!
Can mortal sight, so oft bedim'd with tears,
Such glory bear!—for lo, the shadows fly

* The influence of the philosophic spirit, in humanizing the mind, and preparing it for intellectual exertion and delicate pleasure;—in exploring, by the help of geometry, the system of the universe;—in banishing superstition;—in promoting navigation, agriculture, medicine, and moral and political science.

From Nature's face; confusion disappears,
And order charms the eye, and harmony the ears!

"In the deep windings of the grove, no more
The hag obscene, and grisly phantom dwell;
Nor in the fall of mountain-stream, or roar
Of winds, is heard the angry spirit's yell;
No wizard mutters the tremendous spell,
Nor sinks convulsive in prophetic swoon;
Nor bids the noise of drums and trumpets swell,
To ease of fancied pangs the labouring Moon,
Or chase the shade that blots the blazing orb of noon.

"Many a long-lingering year, in lonely isle,
Stunn'd with th' eternal turbulence of waves,
Lo, with dim eyes, that never learn'd to smile,
And trembling hands, the famish'd native craves
Of Heaven his wretched fare; shivering in caves,
Or scorch'd on rocks, he pines from day to day;
But Science gives the word; and lo, he braves,
The surge and tempest, lighted by her ray,
And to a happier land wafts merrily away!

"And even where Nature loads the teeming plain
With the full pomp of vegetable store,
Her bounty, unimprov'd, is deadly bane:
Dark woods and rankling wilds, from shore to shore,
Stretch their enormous gloom; which to explore

Even Fancy trembles, in her sprightliest mood;
For there, each eye-ball gleams with lust of gore,
Nestles each murderous and each monstrous brood,
Plague lurks in every shade, and steams from every flood.

" 'Twas from Philosophy man learn'd to tame
The soil, by plenty to intemperance fed.
Lo, from the echoing axe, and thundering flame,
Poison and plague and yelling rage are fled!
The waters, bursting from their slimy bed,
Bring health and melody to every vale:
And, from the breezy main, and mountain's head,
Ceres and Flora, to the sunny dale,
To fan their glowing charms, invite the fluttering gale.

" What dire necessities on every hand
Our art, our strength, our fortitude require!
Of foes intestine what a numerous band
Against this little throb of life conspire!
Yet Science can elude their fatal ire
Awhile, and turn aside Death's level'd dart,
Sooth the sharp pang, allay the fever's fire,
And brace the nerves once more, and cheer the heart,
And yet a few soft nights and balmy days impart.

" Nor less to regulate man's moral frame
Science exerts her all-composing sway.
Flutters thy breast with fear, or pants for fame,
Or pines, to indolence and spleen a prey,

Or avarice, a fiend more fierce than they?
Flee to the shade of Academus' grove;
Where cares molest not, discord melts away
In harmony, and the pure passions prove
How sweet the words of Truth, breath'd from the lips
of Love.

"What cannot Art and Industry perform,
When Science plans the progress of their toil!
They smile at penury, disease, and storm;
And oceans from their mighty mounds recoil.
When tyrants scourge, or demagogues embroil
A land, or when the rabble's headlong rage
Order transforms to anarchy and spoil,
Deep-vers'd in man the philosophic sage
Prepares with lenient hand their phrenzy to assuage.

"'Tis he alone, whose comprehensive mind,
From situation, temper, soil, and clime
Explor'd, a nation's various powers can bind,
And various orders, in one form sublime
Of policy, that midst the wrecks of time,
Secure shall lift its head on high, nor fear
Th' assault of foreign or domestic crime,
While public faith, and public love sincere,
And industry and law maintain their sway severe."

Enraptur'd by the hermit's strain, the youth
Proceeds the path of Science to explore.

And now, expanded to the beams of truth,
New energies and charms unknown before,
His mind discloses: Fancy now no more
Wantons on fickle pinion through the skies;
But, fix'd in aim, and conscious of her power,
Aloft from cause to cause exults to rise,
Creation's blended stores arranging as she flies.

Nor love of novelty alone inspires,
Their laws and nice dependencies to scan;
For, mindful of the aids that life requires,
And of the services man owes to man,
He meditates new arts on Nature's plan;
The cold desponding breast of sloth to warm,
The flame of industry and genius fan,
And emulation's noble rage alarm,
And the long hours of toil and solitude to charm.

But she, who set on fire his infant heart,
And all his dreams, and all his wanderings shar'd
And bless'd, the Muse, and her celestial art,
Still claim th' enthusiast's fond and first regard.
From Nature's beauties variously compar'd
And variously combin'd, he learns to frame
Those forms of bright perfection,* which the bard,
While boundless hopes and boundless views inflame,
Enamour'd consecrates to never-dying fame.

* General ideas of excellence, the immediate archetypes of sublime imitation, both in painting and in poetry. See Aristotle's Poetics, and the Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Of late, with cumbersome, tho' pompous show,
Edwin would oft his flowery rhyme deface,
Through ardour to adorn; but Nature now
To his experienced eye a modest grace
Presents, where ornament the second place
Holds, to intrinsic worth and just design
Subservient still. Simplicity apace
Tempers his rage: he owns her charm divine,
And clears th' ambiguous phrase, and lops th' unwieldy line.

Fain would I sing (much yet unsung remains)
What sweet delirium o'er his bosom stole,
When the great shepherd of the Mantuan plains*
His deep majestic melody 'gan roll:
Fain would I sing what transport storm'd his soul,
How the red current throb'd his veins along,
When, like Pelides, bold beyond controul,
Without art graceful, without effort strong,
Homer rais'd high to Heaven the loud, th' impetuous song.

And how his lyre, though rude her first essays,
Now skilled to sooth, to triumph, to complain,
Warbling at will through each harmonious maze,
Was taught to modulate the artful strain,
I fain would sing:—but ah! I strive in vain.
Sighs from a breaking heart my voice confound,

* Virgil.

With trembling step, to join yon weeping train,
I haste, where gleams funereal glare around,
And mix'd with shrieks of woe, the knells of death resound.

Adieu, ye lays, that Fancy's flowers adorn,
The soft amusement of the vacant mind!
He sleeps in dust, and all the Muses mourn,
He, whom each virtue fir'd, each grace refin'd,
Friend, teacher, pattern, darling of mankind!
He sleeps in dust.* Ah, how shall I pursue
My theme! To heart-consuming grief resign'd,
Here on his recent grave I fix my view,
And pour my bitter tears. Ye flowery lays, adieu!

Art thou, my GREGORY, for ever fled!
And am I left to unavailing woe!
When fortune's storms assail this weary head,
Where cares long since have shed untimely snow!
Ah, now for comfort whither shall I go!
No more thy soothing voice my anguish cheers:
Thy placid eyes with smiles no longer glow,
My hopes to cherish, and allay my fears.
'Tis meet that I should mourn: flow forth afresh, my tears.

* This excellent person died suddenly on the 10th of February 1773. The conclusion of the poem was written a few days after.

THE END.

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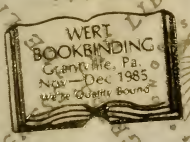

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